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**Urban social group segregation:  
a gated community in Mendoza, Argentina**

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**Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in Planning Studies at the University of London**

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**2008**



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Sonia Roitman

*"The present-day patricians no longer need the services of the community; indeed, they cannot see what staying in and with the community could offer which they have not already secured for themselves or still hope to secure through their own exploits, while they can think of quite a lot of assets which they might lose if they were to abide by the demands of communal solidarity".*

*"People who believe that nothing can be done to tone down, let alone to exorcise, the spectre of insecurity are busy shopping for burglar alarms and barbed wire. What they are after is an equivalent of a personal nuclear shelter; the shelter they are after they call 'community'. The 'community' they seek stands for a burglar-free and stranger-proof 'safe environment'. 'Community' stands for isolation, separation, protective walls and guarded gates".*

*"Safe neighbourhood visualized as armed gatekeepers controlling the entry; stalker and prowler, who have come to replace the early modern bugbear of mobile vulgus, jointly promoted to the rank of new public enemies number one; a paring down of public areas to 'defensible' enclaves with selective access; separation in lieu of the negotiation of life in common; the criminalization of residual difference – these are the principal dimensions of the current evolution of urban life".*

*"Given the intensity of fears, were there no strangers they would have to be invented. And they are invented, or rather construed, daily: by neighbourhood watch, closed-circuit TV, hired guards armed to the teeth. Vigilance and the defensive/aggressive exploits it triggers create their own object. Thanks to them, the stranger is transmogrified into an alien, and the alien into a threat".*

*(Bauman, 2001)*

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A.Pro.CUP.	Asociación Propietarios Conjunto Urbano Palmares (Palmares Homeowners' Association)
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CC	Clubes de Campo
CCTV	Closed-circuit television
CN	Closed Neighbourhood
DEIE	Dirección de Estadísticas e Investigaciones Económicas, Gobierno de Mendoza (Direction of Statistics and Economic Researches, Government of Mendoza)
DOADU	Dirección de Ordenamiento Ambiental y Desarrollo Urbano, Ministerio de Ambiente y Obras Públicas (Direction of Environmental Planning and Urban Development, Ministry of Environment and Public Buildings)
FC	Farm Club
GC	Gated Community/ Gated Communities
GT	Garden-Tower
GOV.	Government/s
ID	Identification
INDEC	Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (National Institute of Statistics and Censuses)
M	Mega-project
MABA	Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires
MAM	Metropolitan Area of Mendoza
Mercosur	Mercado Común del Sur
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
P.	Palmares
S.R.	Sonia Roitman
SEG.	Segregation
USA	United States of America

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## **ABSTRACT**

Gated communities are becoming an increasingly distinctive feature in contemporary cities worldwide. Their growth and multiplication has provoked serious concerns about their argued role in encouraging urban social segregation. This thesis sustains that this is an area of contention characterised by contradictory empirical descriptions. It also sustains that the absence of a conceptual framework constitutes a major obstacle for the understanding of the social consequences of gated communities. The purpose of the thesis is therefore to provide a conceptual framework and to answer two main questions: Is there a relationship between living in gated communities and urban social segregation? And if there is, how can this be explained?

The thesis develops a conceptual framework drawing upon concepts from structuration theory to address these questions. This framework defines and establishes relationships between four key concepts: gated communities, urban social group segregation, social practices and viewpoints. The latter two are proposed as instruments for the analysis of urban social group segregation carried out by gated communities' residents.

The thesis identifies and examines social practices and viewpoints of particular urban social groups living inside and in the surrounding areas of a gated community, in terms of their influences on urban social group segregation. The fieldwork of the research was carried out in a gated community called "Conjunto Urbano Palmares" in Mendoza, an intermediate city in Argentina. The research used a qualitative methodology with in-depth interviews as the main research tool.

The findings of the research indicate that living in gated communities favours urban social group segregation. There is a relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation that can be explained through the social practices and viewpoints of their residents. The particular attributes of the gated communities also contribute to the segregation of their residents from the outside local communities.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

The thesis is concerned with understanding and explaining the social consequences of the development of gated communities on the social life of cities. It examines the propositions most frequently encountered and discussed in the literature that link the proliferation of gated communities to urban social segregation. This examination is guided by the need to answer the two central questions of the thesis: Is there a relationship between living in gated communities and urban social segregation? And if there is, how can this be explained? The analysis of the ideas from the literature leads the thesis to elaborate the concept of urban social group segregation and to define a set of social practices and related viewpoints of the gated communities' residents and the surrounding local communities' members. Social practices and viewpoints may (or may not) contribute to urban social group segregation. This analysis is supported by the study of the gated community known as Palmares in Mendoza, an intermediate city in Argentina.

Urban gated communities have proliferated worldwide in recent years. Research on this topic shows the existence of differences between countries as far as their design and target population are concerned. The peculiarity of gated communities rests on five elements: closure and privatisation; security devices and amenities; private government and a code of conduct regulating behaviour and housing construction; the social homogeneity of their residents; and their voluntary character since residents choose to live in these settlements.

Gated communities have security devices such as walls, fences, barriers, alarms, guards, gates controlled by codes or electronic identification devices and video surveillance cameras. They have high quality services and social infrastructure, for example, clubhouses, bars or restaurants, chapels, convenience stores and sports amenities. These might allow their residents to spend their leisure time without needing to step outside the walls. For their management, they usually have a residents' association, which establishes and enforces internal rules. Their residents must follow a code of conduct concerning social behaviour and building regulations.

Gated communities appear, according to this thesis, as homogeneous places in relation not only to the socio-economic level of their residents, but also to the latter's interests and values. Gated communities' residents are usually upper middle-class families. Adults usually work in the private sector and are successful professionals or medium-sized company owners. Children usually attend private schools. They have voluntarily moved to gated communities looking for security and more comfortable and relaxing environments as well as social homogeneity.

The thesis defines gated communities as closed urban residential settlements voluntarily occupied by a homogeneous social group, where public space has been privatised by restricting access through the implementation of security devices. They are conceived as closed settlements from their inception and are designed with the intention of providing security to their residents and prevent penetration by non-residents; their houses are of high quality and have services and amenities that can be used only by their residents, who pay regular compulsory maintenance fees. They have a private body governing and enforcing internal rules concerning behaviour and construction.

The growing importance given to gated communities as a worldwide object of study by policymakers and the academic community is a reflection of the increasing prominence that these residential schemes have acquired in the urban landscape over the last few decades. In the United States of America, for example, there were more than 20,000 gated communities, with 3,000,000 houses in 1997 (Blakely & Snyder, 1997a) and more than 7,000,000 households living in walled communities in 2001 (Sánchez *et al.*, 2001). According to a research on gated communities in the United Kingdom funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, there were more than a thousand gated communities with about 100,000 residents in England in 2003 (Atkinson *et al.*, 2004). Since the mid 1990s, there has also been an increase of gated communities in Russia (Lentz, 2006). Although walls are not a new phenomenon in China, wealthy gated communities “are particularly novel in the Chinese context because income differences have only really been conspicuously revealed in spatial patterns since the housing market was created in the 1990s” (Webster *et al.*, 2006: 158).



Gated communities also represent a frequent type of residential settlement in many Latin American cities, especially in large ones. In the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires (MABA), Argentina, there were 351 gated communities in 2000 with 27,000 houses and about 50,000 permanent residents (Thuillier, 2005b). Gated communities are also a major phenomenon in intermediate cities. In the case of intermediate Argentinian cities, the development of this type of residential settlement is becoming increasingly important, which makes this study especially relevant.

Gated communities refer to a particular urban space organisation that has consequences on social relationships. This explains the significance of their study, which has attracted scholars from different disciplines within the social sciences since the 1990s. There has been a considerable number of books, articles in journals, papers presented at conferences, graduates' theses and policymakers' reports written on gated communities during the last 15 years. Many of them are reviewed in Chapter 2.

Pioneering works like those of Edward Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder (1997a) and Teresa Caldeira (2000) are comprehensive analytical studies about gated communities in United States of America and Brazil respectively. Since the year 2000 there has been a blossoming of papers and research in different cities around the world. Case studies give a picture of similarities and differences between gated communities worldwide. Most of these works are mainly descriptive, but a few works provide theoretical explanations and deeper analyses, such as Maristella Svampa's book *Los que ganaron* (2001). Finally, since 2003, and simultaneous to the process of studying cases in different cities, the need to move to a higher level for the understanding of gated communities has appeared as essential. Some scholars like Wu (2005) and Janoschka & Glasze (2003) have suggested how to start developing further theoretical explanations on issues regarding this type of urban space organisation.

The explanatory arguments from those works that go beyond descriptions evidence this need for further theoretical elaborations to understand this field of study. This will enable data comparisons and generalisations. The lack of a conceptualisation of urban social group segregation linked to gated communities contributes to the

difficulty in building a theoretical explanation of how the relationship between living in gated communities and urban social segregation is established, and what the elements that help to explain this theoretical relation are. Consequently, the thesis aims to develop a theoretical framework that facilitates an explanation of the relationship between these two concepts.

The literature examining the link between the development of gated communities and the process of urban social segregation does not clearly establish the existence of a relationship between these two concepts, and more importantly, it does not shed light on how this relationship can be analysed and explained. The literature shows two contradictory arguments. Some researchers maintain that the expansion of gated communities has been influential in the increase of urban social segregation, called by one of them “a new pattern of segregation” (Caldeira, 2000). Conversely, another group of scholars maintains that gated communities do not encourage segregation because segregation already exists in cities (Alvarez, 2005) or because there is a reduction in the spatial scale of segregation (Sabatini & Cáceres, 2004). This theoretical dispute and the explanations given define the theoretical field of the thesis.

The thesis argues that it is essential to distinguish between urban social segregation and urban social group segregation to address the link between living in gated communities and segregation. Most literature refers to urban social segregation as a social process happening at the city-scale influenced mainly by structural forces. On the other hand, as will be explained more extensively in Chapter 3, urban social group segregation refers to a micro-level process where different social groups want to distance themselves from other social groups or society as a whole because of their different interests and values. The difference is based on the scale of analysis: while urban social segregation considers different social groups, urban social group segregation looks mainly at a particular social group and studies its interests and motivations. Although most literature on gated communities uses the concept of urban social segregation, the thesis argues that the concept of urban social group segregation is more relevant because it allows for an understanding of the particular dynamics of gated communities’ residents and therefore the reasons for its isolation. Both individual and structural elements influence urban social group segregation.

The thesis analyses the phenomenon of urban social group segregation by studying gated communities' residents as the social group which segregates itself from the outside local communities.

The theoretical problem addressed by the thesis is related to the lack of an explanation of how the relationship between gated communities and segregation can be established and analysed, when this relationship is found. This theoretical void requires the elaboration of a theoretical framework that encompasses the components involved, the connections between these concepts and the instruments to explain the conceptual relationships.

The need to identify a theoretical framework to explain urban social group segregation led to the study of two theoretical sociological schools dealing with urban social segregation. Spatial sociology<sup>1</sup> and the Marxist approach to segregation were reviewed to identify how they could contribute to the definition of urban social group segregation. This provided useful elements for the examination of segregation since they study the relationships between urban space and society. The concepts of social practices and viewpoints were identified as possible instruments to explain the relation between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation as a result of the examination of these schools. The need to consider both subjective and structural forces influencing segregation for the elaboration of this thesis was another outcome from these theoretical perspectives. Nevertheless, they refer mainly to segregation as a macro-scale social problem.

The examination of structuration theory, which considers social practices as a key concept for understanding the dynamics of social life and analyses micro-scale processes, was considered as a possible framework to address urban social group segregation. Although this social theory does not concentrate specifically on segregation, its main concepts and ideas were used to build a conceptual framework to explain the relationships between urban social group segregation and living in gated communities. Some elements recognised by spatial sociology and the Marxist approach were also used to enrich this framework.

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<sup>1</sup> Spatial sociology refers to "that part of sociology which employs spatial analysis to elucidate social structures" (Peach, 1975: 5).

From the review of the literature four concepts emerged, all requiring revision. They form the core of the conceptual framework of the thesis developed in Chapter 3. Firstly, the concept of gated communities needed to be revised to take into account its particular attributes. Secondly and thirdly, the concepts of social practices and viewpoints were suggested as instruments to explain the phenomenon of segregation by gated communities' residents. Social practices are understood as regular, conscious, recognised and collective actions carried out by social actors according to their interests and needs. Viewpoints are considered as the expression of values, feelings, attitudes and knowledge held by social actors. Fourthly, the concept of urban social group segregation had to be developed to explain the process of segregation at a micro-scale, considering the causes that lead a social group to separate itself from other social groups. Urban social group segregation is understood as the separation of a social group from other groups living in spatial proximity, expressed through the absence of social interactions between them.

The studied social practices are called in this thesis "neighbouring social practices" because they assume social interactions between different social groups living in spatial proximity. Therefore, the social practices and viewpoints of the residents of the local communities outside gated communities were also considered. Bearing in mind the location of these settlements, their surrounding communities are usually neighbourhoods, whose population are from different social strata, ranging from very poor to middle-class households.

The study of urban social group segregation related to living in gated communities through the examination of social practices and viewpoints is the main contribution of the thesis. The analysis of social practices and viewpoints explains whether these "neighbouring social practices" and viewpoints contribute to the segregation of gated communities' residents or not, and if so, whether segregation is an intended or unintended consequence carried out by gated communities' residents to isolate themselves from the outside local communities. Segregation is intended when it is consciously pursued by social actors and is unintended when social actors are not aware of it as an outcome of their social practices and viewpoints or, if they are aware of this, they have not chosen to pursue it.

Based on the conceptual framework elaborated, the thesis formulates five questions to guide the research and explain the relationships between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation. The research questions are as follows:

- Is urban social group segregation pursued by gated communities' residents? And if so, how does this happen?
- How are "neighbouring social practices" performed by gated communities' residents?
- In which situations do some "neighbouring social practices" lead to urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents?
- How do "insiders" and "outsiders'" viewpoints influence the consequences of "neighbouring social practices"?
- How can it be explained that some "neighbouring social practices" by gated communities' residents lead to urban social group segregation, when they are supposed to facilitate social interactions?

The answer to these questions is expressed by the following theoretical proposition:

"Neighbouring social practices" by gated communities' residents lead to intended urban social group segregation by this social group, which is explained by their viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community.

The methodological proposition of the thesis identifies a set of social practices, which might involve social interactions between gated communities' residents and the outside local communities' members, and related viewpoints to be analysed to support or contradict the theoretical proposition of the thesis. These "neighbouring social practices" are: 1) use of public space; 2) institutional communication between inside and outside communities; 3) charity work benefiting the outside poor communities; 4) job provision for outside communities; 5) social relations and venues for socialisation; 6) shopping; 7) schooling; 8) religious practices; 9) sports; and 10) use of public transport. Viewpoints can be positive or negative, influencing segregation as an unintended consequence in the first case or as an intended consequence in the second case.

The field research focused on gathering data relevant to three broad components of the case study. Firstly, information to describe the gated community used as case study, considering its attributes in relation to the definition of this type of residential settlement (analysed in Chapter 5). Secondly, information about how the gated community's residents, and other actors, such as the outside residents, describe and view life in a gated community, in relation to issues such as status, social differences and discrimination including the future of gated communities (analysed in Chapter 6). Thirdly, information about "neighbouring social practices" as well as particular and general viewpoints (analysed in Chapters 7 and 8). With the information thus gathered, the thesis aims at finding empirical evidence to support the relationship between gated communities and segregation.

The thesis used a qualitative methodology with a case study strategy. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. A second research tool used was observation of the gated community and its dynamics. The research was carried out in Mendoza, an intermediate city of about 1,000,000 inhabitants, in Argentina. There have been few studies published on gated communities in intermediate cities, and this research intends to contribute to the understanding of the process of urban social group segregation, particularly in this country and in intermediate cities. Since the thesis studies gated communities in Argentina, there is a special interest to review the Latin American literature on gated communities, as a contribution of the thesis.

A pilot study of the gated communities located in the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza (MAM) led to the selection of "Conjunto Urbano Palmares" (known as Palmares) as the case study because of its location, size, year of construction and prestige within the Mendocinean society. It is located in the Municipality of Godoy Cruz, one of the six municipalities forming MAM, and is surrounded by a diverse group of communities. Social differences are evident in the area as there are notable contrasts between the lifestyles of the people living within the walls of the gated community and those of families who live in the surrounding areas.

The residents of Palmares were interviewed as the main study group. They were selected by snowballing, quota and purposive sampling methods, similarly to the outside local communities' members. Other actors (policymakers, government staff,

researchers and staff from the settlement) were selected through purposive sampling. The thesis followed a flexible approach to data analysis, consisting of identifying themes and categories, coding and interpreting data. N-Vivo software was used for the data analysis.

The social practices and viewpoints of gated communities' residents and the people living outside acquired a special relevance in Argentina after the economic, social and political crisis of 2001, when the number of families living below the poverty line increased by nearly 20 percent. Nowadays, whilst 23 percent of the population still live below the poverty line, gated communities continue to proliferate in many Argentinian cities.

The thesis is organised in nine chapters. After the presentation of the main ideas of the thesis in this Introduction (Chapter 1), Chapter 2 reviews the literature on gated communities. It first considers the discussion of social inequalities in Latin America and the different topics analysed in relation to this over the last four decades. The expansion of gated communities as an expression of social inequalities in the city is one of the current analysed topics. The chapter also discusses the development of this type of residential settlement in Argentina and develops a typology for its analysis. Later the different attributes that characterised gated communities are discussed to arrive to a definition of this object of study. Causes and consequences of the multiplication of gated communities are examined, focusing on the relationship between them and segregation.

Chapter 3 concentrates on the analysis of segregation in relation to gated communities. The ideas of spatial sociology, following the Chicago School and later contributors, and the Marxist school are reviewed. The review of the literature shows the difficulty of using these sociological approaches since they consider segregation mainly on a macro-scale. Consequently, structuration theory (mainly the work by Giddens) is reviewed as a theory that does a micro-analysis of social life. It considers social practices as a central concept, giving equal relevance to the influence of structural and subjective factors over segregation. Later the theoretical framework for the thesis is elaborated in this chapter. Taking into account the results of the literature review and the gaps therein, the thesis aims at identifying the existence of a

relationship between gated communities and segregation and explaining it. The four main concepts for the theoretical proposition are identified as follows: gated communities, social practices, viewpoints and urban social group segregation. They are revised and reformulated for the purposes of the thesis. Social practices and viewpoints of gated communities' residents are considered as the tools to analyse urban social group segregation, a concept proposed and elaborated by this thesis.

On the basis of the theoretical framework, Chapter 4 develops the methodological framework of the thesis. It elaborates the research questions and formulates the theoretical proposition of the thesis. Later a research project that comprises the ideal types developed for the ten "neighbouring social practices" is developed. The last section of this chapter discusses how the fieldwork for the research was conducted, the research methods used, the criteria for the case study selection, who the interviewees were, how they were selected, the main difficulties faced during the process and the data analysis approach used.

The empirical information supporting the case study is analysed in Chapter 5. It includes an overview of gated communities in Godoy Cruz and places Palmares in this context. There is also a short history of Palmares and a description of its physical layout. Following the definition of gated community elaborated in the thesis, the chapter considers the case study's attributes. There is a characterisation of the social group living there and a description of the features of the four outside neighbourhoods studied in the research and their residents. Security devices emplaced in Palmares are addressed as a central characteristic of this gated community. The private body that governs Palmares is also examined, along with its code of conduct.

Chapter 6 is about the viewpoints of residents and non-residents of gated communities on these closed settlements, which are general viewpoints and not specifically related to social practices. It studies whether, according to interviewees, gated communities produce or express social differences. It also discusses issues of discrimination and the image of the gated community. Feeling more secured and acquiring a higher social status are examined as reasons for moving to gated communities. The future of gated communities in MAM is also discussed.



Chapters 7 and 8 analyse the "neighbouring social practices" according to the ideal types suggested in the research project. Chapter 7 considers four practices related to the attributes of the gated community, while Chapter 8 examines six practices that can be carried out by every citizen, regardless of living in a gated community or not. The focus is on how Palmares' residents perform these social practices, but "outsiders" are also considered to see whether social interactions between these two social groups are possible or not.

Finally Chapter 9 points out the main findings of the research, including some contradictions embedded in the nature of gated communities. It also reviews the findings in relation to the theoretical proposition of the thesis. There are comments and recommendations for further research on the topic.

There follows a list of the bibliography used throughout the elaboration of the thesis and the Appendices Section, which includes five appendices. The background of the case study is examined in Appendix A. It focuses on social and urban changes that occurred over the last two decades in MAM, including the Municipality of Godoy Cruz, where the case study is located. Appendix B provides further explanations on how the research was conducted, including tables with the composition of the groups of interviewees and a comment on the topics discussed during the interviews. Appendix C is a list of all interviewees quoted in the thesis with information on their profiles and Appendix D includes the interview schedules used for the field research. Appendix E is a list of papers written and published by the author of this thesis in the course of her PhD work.

## **CHAPTER 2:**

### **GATED COMMUNITIES: A LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

Gated communities started developing many years ago<sup>2</sup>, but became physically more prominent in the urban landscape of hundreds of cities over the last 30 years, provoking intellectual preoccupation and research interest from different disciplines since the late 1990s. This chapter examines the literature on gated communities as an object of study that has received considerable attention over the last years. The aim of the chapter is to understand the nature of this type of settlement, particularly in the case of Latin America. The main question of this chapter is how the literature has dealt with gated communities and its social consequences, focusing on urban social group segregation within the latter. Different definitions of gated communities are reviewed along with the causes and consequences of their development.

The chapter is organised into six sections: Section 2.1 starts with the examination of how social inequalities in Latin America have been discussed within the literature and how gated communities have become a significant research topic. Section 2.2 reviews the development of gated communities in Argentina, considering their evolution and urban planning, typology and legislation. Then, Section 2.3 examines how the literature, according to worldwide case studies, has defined the concept of gated communities. Section 2.4 discusses the causes of their development, considering structural and subjective causes. Later, Section 2.5 reviews the consequences of gated communities paying special attention to their social consequences. Finally, Section 2.6 discusses the link between gated communities and urban social segregation as it appears in the literature.

#### **2.1. Social inequalities in the Latin American city: the development of gated communities**

From the colonial to the postmodern city, Latin American cities have always been characterised for manifesting strong social inequalities in the territory. The analysis

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<sup>2</sup> Blakely and Snyder (1997a) identify the origins of gated communities in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and also mention that Roman soldiers lived in this type of settlement in 300 B.C.

of these inequalities has been one of the major topics in the theoretical debate during the last four decades.

Over the 1970s, the main discussed issues in Latin America were around dependency theory (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979), marginality (Germani, 1980), social movements and marginality (Castells, 1983), social struggles and politics (Kowarick, 1994) as well as housing and land policies (Gilbert *et al.*, 1982; Hardoy and Satterthwaite, 1981). The state had a strong role in the provision of services and infrastructure, especially social housing for poor groups. Community participation in housing and service provision projects was promoted from the state sector and civil society organisations (Herzer & Pérez, 1991; Gilbert, 1998).

The opening of the economies of many Latin American countries during the 1980s and the implementation of neoliberal policies brought into the debate the analysis of social policies and the role of the state (Oszlak, 1982), the role of the market and the development of uneven economic growth and social differences (Beccaria, 1993) and also the analysis of migratory processes (Gilbert, 1998). The processes of democratisation in the region were also analysed, especially in relation to the development of democratic institutions and modernity (García Canclini, 2005). The image of the city and urban representations (Silva, 1992) also appeared as a significant topic.

Later in the 1990s, the impact of the neoliberal paradigm implemented in Latin America encouraged the analysis of the social effects of this economic change with the examination of the economic restructuring and decentralisation processes (Tenti Fanfani, 1992; Morley, 2000), income distribution (Altimir & Beccaria, 2001), changes in the labour market (Coraggio, 1999; de Mattos, 2002), social policies (Lo Vuolo *et al.*, 1999; Cuenya & Falú, 1997), urban management and the role of the state (Pérez, 1995), segregation (Katzman, 1999; Sabatini, 1997 & 1998), the middle-class (Svampa & González Bombal, 2001, Minujín, 1995) and the “new poor” population (Minujín, 1992; Feijoó, 2001). The influence of international organisations like International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank in the implementation and monitoring of social policies also received important attention in the academic debate (Klisberg, 2002; Lo Vuolo *et al.*,

1999). Similarly than in the previous decades, the process of urbanisation of the region with particular emphasis on housing policies continued to be analysed (ECLAC, 1996). The examination of private investments and the transformation of the urban landscape creating “strategic” and “deprived” areas was also considered (Mignaqui & Elguezabal, 1997; Ciccolella, 1999; Torres, 2001) and continued to be a central topic in the following years. Culture and globalisation and their impact on the city (García Canclini, 2001) received also scholarly attention.

Many of the topics discussed during the previous decades have remained in the debate agenda over the first decade of the 2000s, like segregation (Prévôt Schapira, 2002), uneven income distribution (Lo Vuolo, 2006), unemployment and informality (Portes & Roberts, 2005), social inclusion and policies (Fidel *et al.*, 2003; Cuenya *et al.*, 2004), urban sustainability (Winchester, 2005), globalisation and popular culture (García Canclini, 2008). Other issues like urban crime also increased in relevance (Dammert, 2001; Hojman, 2002; Portes & Roberts, 2005).

The analysis of the urban form of the Latin American city has also received academic attention since the 1970s, especially within geographers from Germany and the United States of America (see Ford, 1996). Based on this debate, four different models for the urban structure of the Latin American city can be identified (Borsdorf, 2003):

- 1) Colonial city (1500-1820): It was a “compact city” where the main square was the central element and the social position of the citizens was determined by the distance between their house and the main square. There was a natural population growth.
- 2) Sectorial city (1820-1920): It was the city of the first urbanisation period, with a linear shape organised around boulevards. It grew out of migration from Europe.
- 3) Polarised city (1920-1970): It was the city of the second urbanisation period, where the polarisation process manifested in the contrast between affluent neighbourhoods and informal settlements. It mainly grew out of internal migration from rural areas or smaller cities.
- 4) Fragmented city (1970 to today): There is a restructuration of the economy and intermediate cities grow faster than big cities. The main urban symbols are the shopping centres, business parks and gated communities scattered in the territory.

Since gated communities have acquired a significant place in the urban landscape during this last stage of development of the Latin American city, they have become an object of study in most countries of the region. In the case of Mexico City, the research carried out by Safa (2002), Giglia (2003) and Sheinbaum (2005 & 2007) show the development of this process over the last decades. Gated communities have also multiplied in other Mexican cities, like Guadalajara (Cabrales Barajas and Canosa Zamora, 2001 & 2002; Ickx, 2002), Puebla and Toluca (Rodríguez Chumillas & Mollá Ruiz-Gómez, 2002), Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez and Sonora (Enríquez Acosta, 2007; Méndez Sáinz & Rodríguez Chumillas, 2004).

There are also gated communities in San Salvador, El Salvador (Lungo and Baires, 2001; Baires, 2003), in Maracaibo, Venezuela (Bracho de Machado *et al.*, 2007), in Bogotá, Colombia (Ortiz-Gomez, 2002), in Lima, Perú (Plöger, 2006), in Quito, Ecuador (Borsdorf, 2002) and in Montevideo, Uruguay (Alvarez, 2005). The gating-up process has also spread in Chilean cities like Santiago (Borsdorf & Hidalgo, 2004; Fernández-Prajoux, 2005) and Valparaíso (Borsdorf *et al.*, 2007).

Brazil and Argentina are the countries with more number of gated communities in the region. There are a great number of researches carried out in large and medium-sized Brazilian cities (Carvalho *et al.*, 1997; Caldeira, 2000; Coy & Pöhler, 2002; de Lima Ramirez and Ribeiro Soares, 2002; Geraiges de Lemos, *et al.*, 2002; Rodrigues Soares, 2002; Sobarzo Miño & Beltrão Sposito, 2003). In the case of Argentina, most of the research has been conducted in Greater Buenos Aires as it is where gated communities are mostly located. By the late 1980s there were about 140 gated communities in MABA (Robert, 1998). In 2000 this number had risen to about 350, covering 300 square kilometres of its territory with 13,000 permanently occupied houses lodging nearly 50,000 permanent residents<sup>3</sup> (Thuillier, 2005b). Several authors have analysed this process (Arizaga, 2000; Carballo, 2003; Carman, 1999; Clichevsky, 2002; del Cueto, 2007; Frediani, 2001; Lacarrieu, 2002; Libertun de

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<sup>3</sup> There is no official information about numbers of gated communities and their population, nor agreement amongst researchers. Robert (1998) mentioned the existence of 349 gated communities in MABA in 1998, with about 30,000 permanent residents. Clichevsky (2002) considered there were 367 gated communities in 2000 with 12,000 houses permanently occupied. Vidal-Koppmann (2001) suggested the existence of 327 gated communities with more than 150,000 residents in 2001. Finally, Svampa (2004) mentioned that according to the *Federación Argentina de Clubes de Campo* (Argentinian Federation of Country Clubs) they were more than 300,000 people living in gated communities in MABA.

Duren, 2007; Robert, 1998; Rohrbach, 2005; Rojas, 2007; Torres, 1998; Vernik, 1998; Vidal-Koppmann, 2002 & 2008)<sup>4</sup>. There are also gated communities in other Argentinian cities like Rosario (Bragos *et al.*, 2002), Córdoba (Valdés, 1999; Janoschka & Borsdorf, 2006) and Mendoza, where there are currently 70 gated communities, as explained in Sub-section A.2.3. The next section reviews the process of development of gated communities in Argentina.

## **2.2. Gated communities in Argentina**

This section analyses the process of development of gated communities in Argentina. It is organised into three sub-sections: Sub-section 2.2.1 explains their development and urban planning; Sub-section 2.2.2 develops a typology of this type of residential settlement; and Sub-section 2.2.3 examines their legal framework.

### **2.2.1. Development of gated communities and urban planning**

The process of economic restructuring has had a significant impact on Argentinian urban planning. Strategic planning became the dominant idea, along with public-private partnerships. The city became divided into “strategic spaces” where urban investments concentrated and “remnant areas” that did not receive investments (Torres, 1998), evidencing “territorial micro-differences” (Ciccolella, 1999) within the urban space, as mentioned in the previous section. State intervention in the urban territory diminished during the 1990s since the state started playing the role of “enabler” according to the needs of private investors, who evolved into key actors of the urban transformations (Pírez, 2002; Ciccolella, 1999). Regulations regarding urban planning became more flexible, facilitating private investments.

Argentinian urban planning regulations lie heavily on the authority of municipalities through the issue of by-laws. Projects are usually approved after implementation, more to legitimise than to control them. Moreover, government agencies lack the financial, technological and human resources to successfully carry out their duties. Guy Thuillier observes that “due to a structural lack of real powers and resources of the municipalities, it is clear that controlling this urbanisation causes the greatest

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<sup>4</sup> To avoid repetitions, and due to the great number of authors who have written on gated communities in Buenos Aires, this list contains the names of some researchers, whereas others are mentioned in other sections of the thesis.

difficulties for local authorities” (Thuillier, 2005b: 269). Pedro Pérez (2002) criticises the lack of planning guidelines and the role of the private sector in shaping the city according to its economic interests, or political interests in the case of the local governments, which do not serve the public interest.

After a negative decade, the construction industry recovered in the early 1990s due to new credit offers and monetary stability. However, it declined again in the mid-1990s as a result of the impacts of the Mexican and Brazilian crises. The construction industry only recovered and created new jobs in 2003 (Lozano, 2003). Since then the construction of individual houses, mainly located in gated communities, has considerably increased. Gated communities appear as privileged spaces considered as “islands of wealth in an ocean of poverty” (Coy & Pöhler, 2002: 358).

The expansion of gated communities in MABA over the 1990s is one of its most important urban transformations. However, the first “*club de campo*”<sup>5</sup> in Buenos Aires, the “Tortugas Country Club”, appeared in 1930 connected to *Las Tortugas* polo club (Verdecchia, 1995; Svampa, 2001; Clichevsky, 2002). “*Clubes de campo*” were related to: a) the practice of exclusive sports, such as polo and horse riding (Verdecchia, 1995); b) the value of open-air activities; and c) an attempt to imitate the English way of life (Thuillier, 2005a). They were exclusive places for the socialisation of the elite groups (Svampa, 2004). Houses in “*clubes de campo*” were simple and rustic and used as second residences (Ballent, 1999) and the image of gated communities appeared as the opposite of the city (Robert, 1998).

Later in the 1970s, there was a “boom” of “*clubes de campo*” as a consequence of a strategy of distinction by certain social groups (Svampa, 2004). They became more related to a hedonistic way of life (Prévot Schapira, 2000) than to a desire of living in a quieter area in contact with nature. According to Svampa (2004), the contemporary history of gated communities started in the late 1980s when the supply diversified. During the 1990s, although the development of gated communities was still highly related to strategies of social distinction, it was also the outcome of a new logic of urbanisation, the improvement of road infrastructure and increasing fear of crime in

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<sup>5</sup> As explained in Sub-section 2.2.2 “*club de campo*” (also called “country”) is one type of gated community in Argentina.

the city, following similar trends than in other countries, as analysed later in Section 2.4. There was also an intense marketing campaign aimed at persuading citizens to choose a “better way of life”, copied from the USA’s suburban model (Thuillier, 2005a). The suburbanisation process was extended to upper-middle class social groups, not only to elite groups. Houses located in “*clubes de campo*” became permanent residences due to the extension and improvement of highways as well as the impossibility faced by some families during the economic crises of the 1990s of affording two houses.

The construction of highways increased the supply of affordable land available for residential use in the periphery and contributed to the expansion of gated communities, producing major changes in urban land prices. In Argentina, like in many Latin American cities, gated communities are usually located in the periphery where land is available at affordable prices, leading to the coexistence in the same territory of affluent and low-income families, who are the original residents of the periphery. Pérez (2002) speaks of a “micro-fragmentation” of the city as extreme social groups are placed together sharing a territory but remaining very distant in social terms.

The relevance acquired by gated communities as a housing option for upper-middle and wealthy families was reflected in a massive marketing campaign through the organisation of annual gated communities’ fairs and exhibitions in which developers would promote their products. In addition, the media, especially newspapers, played a key role as promoter of gated communities. The two most important newspapers of Argentina started printing out a weekly 15-page section specialising in gated communities<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, since 1997 an annual guide of gated communities in MABA is published<sup>7</sup>. It has more than 130 pages illustrating all settlements, their characteristics, location, services provided, prices of plots and houses as well as maintenance fees.

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<sup>6</sup> In September 1996 *La Nación* and in September 1998 *Clarín* (both national newspapers) started printing out a specialised weekly section with information about gated communities, and social and sport events related to these closed settlements.

<sup>7</sup> This guide was first called *Guía de Countries y Barrios Privados*, published by Publicountry SRL from 1997 to 2000, then called *Guía Intercountries* and later *Guía de Countries, Barrios Privados y Chacras*, Publicountry (2005).



The multiplication of gated communities has lacked specific guidelines for land use and urban planning and has been driven by the market. Many local governments have favoured their development as they constitute a crucial source of revenue in a context of bankrupted governments (Janoschka, 2003). This situation creates competition amongst municipalities to attract gated communities and “municipalities with fewer resources are more likely to modify urban codes to allow for the development of gated communities” (Libertum de Duren, 2006: 320).

Increasing fear of crime and increasing crime events in Argentinian cities have acted as triggers to move to gated communities, similarly to what has happened worldwide as explained in Section 2.4. The provision of security has been overvalued in the case of Argentinian gated communities, which are advertised as the opposite of the ‘open city’<sup>8</sup>. In the second half of the 1990s when gated communities expanded, insecurity was not considered as serious as it has been since 2000. Janoschka affirmed that urban insecurity was mentioned as a secondary factor by gated communities’ residents, the first motive being “an authentically alternative lifestyle” where “the complex surveillance is part of a series of services that does not have enough alternatives in the real estate market”<sup>9</sup> (Janoschka, 2002: 5). This emphasises that gated communities’ residents not only value gated communities’ security devices, but also their infrastructure, services provided, location as well as social homogeneity and status. However, services provided in gated communities vary according to the type of settlement, as indicated in the next sub-section.

### **2.2.2. Typology of gated communities in Argentina**

The expansion of gated communities in Argentina over the 1990s produced a diversification in the supply side of these settlements. In addition to the “*clubes de campo*” and “closed neighbourhoods” other types appeared emphasising different features. This typology of gated communities in Argentina has been constructed based on the work of Robert (1998), Svampa (2001 & 2004) and Arizaga (2005). It also considers information provided by *Guía de Countries, Barrios Privados y*

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<sup>8</sup> However, it is worth mentioning that news about crimes within gated communities started to be broadcast very regularly by the media during 2006 and 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Translation by Sonia Roitman (S.R.). Hereafter, except stated otherwise, all translations from Spanish are by S.R..

*Chacras* (Publiccountry, 2005) and the specialised sections in the national newspapers.

It is possible to identify six different types of gated communities in Argentina: 1) “*clubes de campo*”; 2) “closed neighbourhoods”; 3) “garden-towers”; 4) “farm-clubs”; 5) “nautical-clubs”, and 6) “mega-projects”. Their target residents are in most cases families, especially with children. Different to the situation in other countries, such as the United States of America or the United Kingdom, gated communities in Argentina are not yet aimed at retired people and hardly at single professionals, with the exception of “garden-towers”. There are rules to be followed regarding building materials, heights of buildings and housing styles in most gated communities, in addition to a code of conduct that residents agree to follow when they sign their contracts or get the deeds of the property. Whilst in the beginning of their development each house was individually built and there was even a sort of competition amongst neighbours for the largest, most expensive and nicest house to be built, nowadays some gated communities offer ready-to-move-in houses for sale, which means more accessible housing for middle-class families.

The oldest type of gated community in Argentina is called “country-club” or simply “*club de campo*”. It is a neighbourhood enclosed by a wall or fence with private security that has important sports facilities, such as tennis courts, golf courses, swimming pool, and occasionally facilities for horse riding and polo, in addition to the clubhouse consisting of a building for meetings and social events. Some “*clubes de campo*” also have commercial infrastructure, in addition to religious and educational facilities within their premises. They are usually aimed at upper-income families since monthly fees are more expensive than in “closed neighbourhoods” with more services offered. Residents also have to pay for a membership when they buy a plot. Land plots are usually more expensive as they are larger than in “closed neighbourhoods”. However, it is worth noting that, until the 1990s, access to a house in a “*club de campo*” was not only related to a high income, but especially to belonging to a particular social group in terms of religion, interests and friendships. After the 1990s, access became more democratic, based mainly on income level, though many “*clubes de campo*” still have strict procedures for the approval of new

residents<sup>10</sup>. One of the characters in Claudia Piñeiro's novel says: "Ours is a neighbourhood closed with barbed wire camouflaged behind different types of hedges...[a] club de campo with golf course, tennis courts, swimming pool, two clubhouses and private security. Fifteen guards during daytime and 22 during the night shifts. A bit more than two protected hectares where only those authorised by us can go into"<sup>11</sup> (Piñeiro, 2005: 25). There are only a few of this type in Mendoza, as later shown in Section A.2.

The second type of gated community is the "closed neighbourhood" (also called "private neighbourhood"), which is also closed and has private security. Unlike the "*clubes de campo*", sports facilities are not always present in this type of neighbourhood or do not represent its main feature. There is usually a clubhouse. This has been the most popular type of gated community during the 1990s as it is more affordable than a "*club de campo*". Maintenance charges are lower, plots are smaller and there is no membership. Private security constitutes the main feature. As Anahí Ballent explains in relation to closed neighbourhoods' residents, "although they pretend enjoying nature, they demand more urban values: security – a new requirement that was not particularly important in the first developments -, fast communications, accessibility and urban infrastructure" (Ballent, 1999: 42). The population of "closed neighbourhoods" are high- and middle-income families, especially young families with children. Palmares, the case study of this research, is a "closed neighbourhood".

The third type of gated community is the "garden-tower" (also called "vertical country" and "vertical-condominium"). It is different from the other five types because it is high-rise and usually located in central areas of the city. It has a physical boundary with 24-hour security, clubhouse, green areas and top quality sport

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<sup>10</sup> A family living in a gated community in Buenos Aires comments on the selection process for acceptance: "The candidates' profiles are distributed to the neighbours through the internet. If any of us has an objection, that person is rejected. Later the family is interviewed by the gated community's staff. In our case it was a long interview in which they asked us about everything: habits, religion, everything. They check if you will be able to pay the membership fees... We felt they did not want us to come with the expectation of getting new friends or work partners... They say no to TV stars, to those who attract gossips and paparazzi... To the Jews? I think there is a journalist with a Jewish surname living here..." (Rojas, 2007: 57).

<sup>11</sup> This is a novel that wittily describes life in a gated community in MABA.

infrastructure: gym, swimming pool, and occasionally tennis courts. Flats are large, usually with good views of the city and high monthly fees for maintenance and security. They are usually inhabited by “dinks” (double income, no kids) who value living in the city centre close to work places. Whilst in some countries like Brazil this type of residential housing is always considered as a type of gated community, this is not the case in Argentina. Some authors like Robert (1998) do not consider it as a type of gated community, whilst others like Svampa (2001 & 2004), Janoschka (2002 & 2003) and Tella & Welch Guerra (2002) do. There are several “garden-towers” in Buenos Aires, but only one in Mendoza.

The fourth type appeared in the mid-1990s and is called “farm-clubs”. Its residences are mainly used as secondary houses. As in all previous types, they have private security and physical boundaries. They have plots larger than previous types as their residents are expecting to grow vegetables as a means of being closer to nature. They also encourage “rural” activities like horse-riding and raising animals. They are located further from the city centre in peri-urban or rural areas and attract upper-middle and wealthy residents.

A fifth type appeared in late 1990s. It is called “*marinas*” or “nautical-clubs”. Owing to their location by the river, “*marinas*” offer water sports opportunities, in addition to attractive landscapes and other infrastructure, such as tennis courts and clubhouses. They have private security and clear physical demarcations. Houses are both for permanent residency and for weekends. Monthly charges are usually similar to the ones in “*clubes de campo*” and therefore its target population is also similar to that type of gated community.

The last and newest type of gated communities is the “mega-project”, also called “private city”. It consists of a group of gated communities with all kinds of urban infrastructure and services, such as schools, offices, recreational and cultural centres, shopping centres, supermarkets and medical centres within their premises. The whole development is surrounded by walls or fences and there is also private security. For each of these projects, different gated communities are aimed at different socio-

economic groups. However, residents have to pay monthly charges and therefore they need to have medium- to high-level incomes. “Nordelta”<sup>12</sup> is a mega-project that occupies 1600 hectares in suburban Buenos Aires. It has 11 gated communities inside, with 9,700 residents, and there are two more settlements under construction. It has 180 hectares of lakes and 8,000 metres of river coast. There are several schools, a medical centre, a shopping centre, and restaurants within its premises. It has its own NGO for charity activities (Rojas, 2007). In relation to Nordelta, Janoschka explains that “the consequent integration of almost all urban functions in areas not accessible to the public is the highest point of exclusion and social segregation” (Janoschka, 2002: 9). In Argentina most scholars consider the mega-project as a type of gated community. However, the extent to which a project of this size should be considered a gated community or whether it is already a private city could be argued. Two projects of this type started been built in Mendoza in 2007.

According to Svampa (2004) and Arizaga (2005), there would be a seventh type of gated communities called “condominium” or “duplex”. It refers to a small group of houses that share security services and have a sort of closure like a barrier (i.e. houses located in a *cul-de-sac* closed by a barrier). There are no common spaces for sharing nor social infrastructure, and houses are more affordable than in the aforementioned types of gated communities. However, this thesis argues that as they do not have the features described in the characterisation of gated communities presented later in Section 2.3, they cannot be considered as a type of gated communities and included in this typology.

The six types of gated communities explained in this sub-section have three common elements: private security, clear physical demarcations and a living environment with different deliberate aspects from the city’s. However, they differ in terms of history: whilst there have been “*clubes de campo*” in Argentina since the 1930s, “farm-clubs”, “nautical-clubs” and “mega-projects” have a very short history. They all provide different services giving more importance to sports, services, location or security according to the interests of their target populations, which are different social groups based on age, interests, occupations and social status, but they all

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<sup>12</sup> For further details on Nordelta, see its website: [www.nordelta.com](http://www.nordelta.com)

belong to the upper-middle and wealthy classes according to the literature. However, they may have different legal frameworks. The next sub-section considers the legislation concerning these residential settlements.

### **2.2.3. Legislation on gated communities in Argentina**

There is no legislation on gated communities at the national level in Argentina. Therefore, other legal instruments, created for other types of housing, are used for gated communities. There is no law which encompasses being the owner of an individual plot or house and at the same time co-owner of the common areas of the gated community (green areas, sport facilities and clubhouse). At the national level “*clubes de campo*” are regulated by National Law 13.512 of Horizontal Property of 1948. This law was originally created to regulate high-rise buildings specifying the difference of individual property from common property. It states that owners of flats are exclusive owners of their flats and co-owners of the land and common spaces within the building. When this law is applied to “*clubes de campo*”, the streets and common areas are treated as condominium property. It also regulates maintenance fees<sup>13</sup>.

Four drafts of a national law regulating gated communities have been presented to the national parliament over recent years. They distinguish between individual property (plots and houses) and common property (green spaces and amenities). They set the owners’ rights and duties, the way the administration of the settlement should be, the existence of a set of rules and regulations giving life to the gated community as a legal entity, establishing permitted uses of common areas and facilities and people allowed to the premises, access conditions, maintenance fees to be paid, functioning of the assembly, in addition to the role and duties of the residents’ associations. Although these drafts were presented to the National Congress and discussed in its commissions, none has yet been approved.

Some settlements have been always closed; but they were not submitted to the provincial or local authorities as gated communities and therefore streets should be in the public domain. Nevertheless, streets cannot be accessed by the public because

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<sup>13</sup> For further information on this topic, see Colman Lerner (1999) and Andorno *et.al.* (2005).

they are within the premises of the settlement surrounded by a wall. This is a contradictory situation and legislation should solve it as it may go against the National Constitution. To avoid this situation, the gated community would have to buy the streets to turn them into private goods and decide over access to the premises.

Neither the national and provincial governments nor the local government have been able to totally control urban development and building construction, which has lead to legal infractions, clientelist relations and corruption (Thuillier, 2005b). Several gated communities lack a definitive approval of their plans (Janoschka, 2003). Many municipalities have established specific ordinances in an attempt to cope with the chaotic expansion of gated communities. But in many cases these ordinances are created after the construction of these settlements and, consequently, they are formulated to respect or protect what is already built. This has been the situation in the case of Palmares, as explained later in Chapter 5.

Having reviewed the development of gated communities in Argentina, their typology and their relation to urban planning and legislation, it is necessary to consider how the worldwide literature has defined this type of settlement.

### **2.3. Towards a concept of gated communities**

Gated communities became objects of research during the 1990s and have since then been analysed by many scholars from different countries. Due to the vast number of works on the subject, this review concentrates on the most pertinent authors to the topic of this thesis to understand and explain gated communities. It considers several definitions of gated communities and examines their attributes, similarities and differences. Since the thesis is focused on gated communities in Latin America, special attention is paid to researchers working on that region.

One of the first books written on this subject was *City of Quartz*, by Mike Davis, published in 1990. It is not specifically on gated communities, but about the city of Los Angeles in general. It addresses the issue of gated communities as an increasing phenomenon. Davis explains: “Residential areas with enough clout are thus able to privatize local public space, partitioning themselves from the rest of the metropolis,

even imposing a variant of neighbourhood ‘passport control’ on outsiders” (Davis, 1998: 246). Davis does not provide a concept of gated communities. However, as mentioned above, he identifies some of their key features, such as privatisation of public space, social insulation, control on outsiders, security and walls as well as mentioning that it is chiefly a residential phenomenon located in suburban areas.

The rise of gated communities in the USA has been widely studied by Edward Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder. Their book *Fortress America* published in 1997 focused solely on gated communities. It considers the phenomenon of “forting-up” and looks at different types of gated communities and the reasons why their residents have moved there. According to them: “Gated communities are residential areas with restricted access in which normally public spaces are privatised. They are security developments with designated perimeters, usually walls or fences, and controlled entrances that are intended to prevent penetration by non-residents. They include new developments and older areas retrofitted with gates and fences, and they are found from the inner cities to the exurbs and from the richest neighbourhoods to the poorest” (Blakely & Snyder, 1997a: 2).

This is a wide characterisation of gated communities since it takes into account not only new settlements built with gates and fences, but also old neighbourhoods that have been later closed as a consequence of increasing urban insecurity. This is the reason that these researchers give for considering gating-up as a social phenomenon, involving not only affluent families, but also the society as a whole. Nevertheless, this thesis considers that gated communities are not for poor citizens, since they include particular services and amenities related to a lifestyle that are not affordable for all social groups. The availability of these services and amenities are central attributes of gated communities.

These components not mentioned in the definition provided by Blakely and Snyder have, however, been considered by these authors in their typology of gated communities based on different physical characteristics and motivations to move to these settlements. They identify three main groups of gated communities: lifestyle communities, prestige communities, and security zone communities. Lifestyle communities provide leisure activities and amenities within their boundaries. In



contrast, prestige communities do not provide recreational amenities and their main features are security and social distinction. The third type is the security zone community where security devices are the main attribute. Some of them have been closed off after being built (Blakely & Snyder, 1997a).

Teresa Caldeira, in her book *City of Walls*, gives a more comprehensive definition of gated communities, which are known as closed condominiums in Brazil. A closed condominium is “a development of multiple residences, mostly high-rises, invariably walled and with security-controlled entrances, usually occupying a large area with landscaping, and including all sorts of amenities for collective use. In the last decade they have become the preferred residence for the rich” (Caldeira, 2000: 243). She adds: “...the enclaves tend to be socially homogeneous environments. People who choose to inhabit these spaces value living amongst selected people (considered to be of the same social group) and away from the undesired interactions, movement, heterogeneity, danger, and the unpredictability of open streets” (Ibid.: 258).

Caldeira points out similar features to those of Davis and Blakely and Snyder like security, control, walls as well as residential spaces. But she adds other attributes such as the social homogeneity of their residents and the existence of services and amenities for the use of the inside people as well as the autonomy that these places could command since they could be “self-contained”. The social homogeneity of gated communities is achieved by high prices of land and housing as well as maintenance fees which act as filters to access to gated communities. This makes them socially homogeneous internally, with different gated communities targeting different social groups.

According to Caldeira, top quality and a great diversity of services and amenities are offered inside gated communities in Brazil to satisfy their residents' demands: “In addition to being distant, secluded, and secure, closed condominiums are supposed to be self-contained worlds. Residents should be provided with almost everything they need so that they can avoid public life in the city” (Ibid.: 266). This idea of “self-contained worlds” opens a line of argument concerning two issues. Firstly, to what extent can gated communities really be isolated from society or from the services provided by the city? Secondly, and most importantly to this thesis, to what extent

can their residents self-segregate from other social groups or the society as a whole as a consequence of living in a “self-contained world”? According to some scholars, it is impossible that gated communities totally detach from society. Ash Amin and Stephen Graham support this position, arguing that “no physically bounded community can ever completely withdraw from the city which surrounds it. No place - even a high-security prison - is ever relationally isolated completely from its surroundings. The relational ties and connections that gated communities have with the rest of the city that surrounds them merely change” (Amin & Graham, 1999: 20). Thus, gated communities are not isolated, but related to other gated communities or particular services. Dennis Judd (1995) identifies the existence of “clusters of gated communities”, whilst Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin (2001) talk about “secessionary networked spaces” that combine built spaces and networked infrastructures for affluent citizens. Maristella Svampa (2004) argues that gated communities are not isolated, but articulated with different kinds of services, schools, and also consumption and recreation places.

According to Svampa (2004), who explains that all gated communities have closed perimeter and private security, as explained in Section 2.2.2, “the peculiarity of gated communities is that they assume a configuration that affirms, from the beginning, social segmentation (from a differentiated and restrictive access), reinforced later by the multiplying effects of the spacialisation of social relations (a constitution of social frontiers more rigid each time)” (Svampa, 2001: 16). Therefore, social exclusivity and social segmentation are also important elements to be considered when analysing gated communities.

Sarah Blandy and Rowland Atkinson define gated communities as “walled or fenced housing developments, to which public access is restricted, characterised by legal agreements which tie the residents to a common code of conduct and (usually) collective responsibility for management” (Atkinson & Blandy, 2005: 178). This definition identifies two new attributes: the existence of a code of conduct that rules life within the limits of the residential complex as well as the neighbourhood’s government, which implies particular responsibilities and rights. Evan McKenzie (1994) also emphasises the role of homeowners associations as the governing body in these settlements along with the importance of the code of conduct and the

monthly fees. The definition by Blandy and Atkinson lacks some components identified in previously reviewed definitions, like the amenities of gated communities and the social homogeneity of their residents, as stated by Caldeira.

The conceptualisations of gated communities reviewed in this section do not give a uniform picture. They provide different elements that characterise these settlements as a residential phenomenon, like enclosure within walls and fences, the use of security devices, as well as the availability of amenities for collective use, the existence of a code of conduct and a residents' association. Most definitions emphasised the physical elements of gated communities, linking spatial analysis to social consequences of gated communities. Other descriptive elements such as the type of housing (low-density single-family houses or high-rise buildings), the location (suburban phenomenon or located in central areas), the socio-economic status of their residents (exclusively targeted at affluent and middle-class groups or at all strata) and their emergence as closed settlements since their inception are not always considered and have sometimes shown disagreements. The first two elements (type of housing and location) do not seem to be relevant for the conceptualisation of gated communities. Conversely, the latter two (socio-economic level of their residents and enclosure) are important for the purpose of this thesis and are reviewed in Chapter 3.

The voluntary character of gated communities is a missing element in all reviewed definitions. It refers to the voluntary choice that families make when they decide to live in this type of neighbourhood. It is related to the subjective causes of the emergence of gated communities, as explained in the next section. The voluntary aspect of gated communities plays an important role in the definition: Did the residents take a conscious and free decision by choosing this type of settlement? Could they have chosen differently? The voluntary character of living in gated communities is relevant to this thesis as it might influence the social practices and viewpoints of their residents and of those who do not live there.

Not all significant elements for understanding what gated communities are and are not, are considered in the conceptualisations reviewed in this section. The existence of several characteristics of gated communities makes comparative studies and

theoretical generalisations difficult as the objects of study are not similar. Therefore, Chapter 3 elaborates a universal conceptualisation of gated communities. The understanding of gated communities implies not only looking at their attributes, but also considering their causes and consequences. Next section examines the causes of their development.

## **2.4. Causes of the arrival of gated communities**

There are several causes influencing the expansion of gated communities. For the purpose of the thesis, and considering the arguments of structuration theory reviewed later in Chapter 3, causes have been organised and classified as structural and subjective. The former refer to the social, economic, political, cultural and religious institutions of a society that influence over other institutions and individuals. The latter refer to conditions created by individual action because of individuals' motivations, desires, interests and opportunities.

### **2.4.1. Structural causes**

The analysis of structural causes influencing social life has been widely covered within the social sciences. When related to gated communities, these causes can be organised into two themes. The first one is wider and relates to the globalisation of the economy that leads to conditions of growing urban social inequalities and processes of advancing social polarisation as well as to the increase of foreign investments. The second theme is more specific and concerns the withdrawal of the state from the provision of basic services, which results into, among other effects, the rise of urban violence and the privatisation of security. The former appears as the most common justification for moving to gated communities.

The globalisation of the economy has had profound effects on the social fabric and also on the city structure. According to Saskia Sassen, "the impact of global processes radically transforms the social structure of cities themselves – altering the organization of labor, the distribution of earnings, the structure of consumption, all of which in turn create new patterns of urban social inequality" (Sassen, 1994: xiv). She explains: "The structure of economic activity has brought about changes in the organization of work that are reflected in a pronounced shift in the job supply, with

strong polarization occurring in the income distribution and occupational distribution of workers” (Ibid.: 122). There is a growing demand for jobs at the high- and low-paying ends of the scale. This does not mean, however, that the middle-class is disappearing. Sassen explains that there is “a dynamic whereby growth contributes to inequality rather than to the expansion of the middle class...” (Ibid.: 117).

In the case of Argentina, whilst a selected group of citizens have enjoyed the benefits of the neo-liberal economic model implemented over the last decades, the living conditions of the majority have deteriorated. This has been conceptualised as the “disappearance” (Garretón *et al.*, 2003) or “squeeze” (Minujín, 1995) of the middle-classes. The process of social polarisation became evident in the Argentinian social structure: The highest 10 percent of the population earned 28 times more than the poorest 10 percent in 2006 (INDEC)<sup>14</sup>.

Uneven income distribution is not new in Argentina<sup>15</sup>. Looking at income levels, short term poverty in Argentina has increased, especially during 2001 and 2002 as a consequence of the economic, political and social crisis that Argentina faced leading to the resignation of the President Antonio de la Rúa in December 2001<sup>16</sup>. In May 2001, 26.2 percent of Argentinian households were living below the poverty line<sup>17</sup>. This figure increased to 41.4 percent in May 2002, peaking at 45.7 percent in October 2002 and going down to 42.6 percent in May 2003. It significantly decreased to 23.1 percent in the first semester of 2006 (INDEC). This group of people who could no longer have access to a minimum basket of goods and services are considered “new poor” and include “those whose life conditions have dropped to levels equal to the poor’s, very much below the conditions they and their precedent generation had in the past, due to a strong and permanent downward mobility”

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<sup>14</sup> Hereafter INDEC refers to INDEC website: [www.indec.gov.ar](http://www.indec.gov.ar) and DEIE refers to DEIE website [www.deie.mendoza.gov.ar](http://www.deie.mendoza.gov.ar).

<sup>15</sup> See Altimir & Beccaria (2001) for a detailed analysis of income distribution in Argentina over the last 30 years.

<sup>16</sup> When de la Rúa left office (20 December 2001), the president of the senate provisionally assumed the presidency for three days. Then the legislative assembly elected a new president who quit seven days later. Therefore, a new provisional president assumed for two days until Eduardo Duhalde was elected by the Legislative Assembly and assumed in January 2, 2002 until the end of that year.

<sup>17</sup> “The measure of poverty according to the method of ‘poverty line’ consists of establishing, based on households’ incomes, whether households have the capacity to meet –through the purchase of goods and services- an array of feeding and non-feeding needs considered essential” (INDEC, 2005: 8). Thus, it considers the costs of the minimum food basket, in addition to the costs of clothes, transport, education, and health (Ibid.).

(Minujín, 1992: 16-17). It is important to consider poverty in the Argentinian context since this group might not be considered poor in other countries. On the other hand, long term poverty, analysed according to unmet basic needs, which considers access to basic education, home access to drinking water and sanitation, housing quality and overcrowding, shows an improvement. There were 22.3 percent of households with unmet basic needs in 1980, 16.5 percent in 1991 and 14.3 percent in 2001 (DEIE). Unemployment escalated with a rate exceeding 10 percent and peaking at 21.5 percent in May 2002 after the crisis and decreased to 15.6 percent in May 2003, dropping to 8.5 percent in the second term of 2007 (INDEC and DEIE).

These structural processes take place in cities and transform urban space. Economic globalisation influences the real estate market and produces “a massive increase in foreign and domestic investment in luxury commercial and residential construction” (Sassen, 1991: 317). In the case of the real estate activity, Sassen points out “the retreat of many real estate developers from the low- and medium-income housing market who are attracted to the rapidly expanding housing demand by the new highly paid professionals and the possibility for vast over-pricing of this housing supply” (Sassen, 1994: 6). This social group mentioned by Sassen demands residential areas with high quality services and infrastructure. Therefore gated communities become a housing option for this group with high incomes, who can afford living in such a type of residential settlement.

The analysis of the real estate sector as one influenced by globalisation, as identified by Sassen, explains the relevance of structural causes on gated communities. Foreign investments spread foreign tendencies. Gated communities, considered a common feature of the urban landscape in USA, have become a frequent element in other cities as developers export this urban model. Guy Thuillier (2000) in his analysis of gated communities in Buenos Aires, Argentina, mentions the introduction of the “American way of life”; whereas Michael Janoschka and Georg Glasze (2003) see gated communities as “the diffusion of a successful real estate product” as well as “part of a ‘global culture’”. Regarding the latter, these authors explain that “in developing countries, gated communities are part of the image of the international and modern elite and are commercialised as part of this ‘global culture’” (Ibid.: 14).

In this context, the relation between economic restructuring, neo-liberal policies and changes in the urban landscape has received scholarly attention. In reference to the economic and social changes of the 1990s in Argentina, Svampa (2004) has studied the transformations in the urban landscape with the upsurge of hypermarkets, shopping centres and multiplex cinemas, but also the multiplication of informal settlements and the walls of the privatised city inhabited by the upper, upper-middle and middle-upward classes. This situation referred by Svampa indicates a tendency towards an increasing process of social polarisation where on one pole of the social structure are the “losers”, who are low-skilled workers, employees from the state like teachers, administrative staff, nurses, and small entrepreneurs; and on the other extreme are the “winners” who are managers and successful professionals. The thesis of social polarisation and the dual city has been widely debated. Saskia Sassen (1994), who is one of its advocates, mentions a tendency towards social polarisation, whilst others, such as Chris Hamnett (1994), Eva van Kempen (1994) and John Mollenkopf and Manuel Castells (1991), identify an increase of middle-groups<sup>18</sup>. Peter Marcuse (1989) is also opposed to the concept of the dual city and refers to the “quartered city”.

As for the residents of gated communities, it is worth noting that some researchers reject the link between social polarisation and the rise of gated communities, arguing that it is not only the elite who move to gated communities, but also citizens with middle-income salaries (Janoschka & Glasze, 2003). Nevertheless, as Svampa (2004) explains, it is not the entire middle-class, but the successful groups who can afford to move to a gated community. These are those high-skilled workers who have been able to adapt to the new conditions of the economy. This shows that there is a structural basis for these social groups to move to gated communities. However, as explained later, these structural forces are also influenced by individual actions and motivations, resulting in some individuals who refuse to live in these closed settlements even when they could afford it.

As the literature shows, gated communities appear as a spatial response for particular social groups to globalisation processes. This is related to the second structural theme

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<sup>18</sup> The discussion about the “dual city” goes beyond the scope of the thesis.

analysed in this sub-section, which discusses the rise of urban violence and the privatisation of security as consequences of the state's withdrawal from the provision of basic services, in this case mainly public security. The economic restructuring of the 1990s and the implementation of neo-liberal policies have resulted in many countries having to cut down on state functions. A reduction in the supply of basic services such as health, education, housing, employment and security has left large population groups without these public provisions. This is accompanied by the wealthy citizens' ability to produce their own private solutions, amongst them, the creation of gated communities (Janoschka & Glasze, 2003). The privatisation of security appears because of the retreat of the state from the provision of security and becomes a new element in the city, which challenges the state's previous monopoly of legitimated use of force (Caldeira, 2000). Cecilia Arizaga adds: "Contrary to what happens to the impoverished middle-class groups, the culture of privatisation activates a whole range of services, formerly considered public and now naturalised as private, in the middle-class groups who have favourably accommodated in the new economic and socio-politic order" (Arizaga, 2005: 49). Thus, "security, like other rights, becomes a consumption good" (Ibid.: 50).

The withdrawal of the state from the provision of security has led to an increase of urban violence. During the 1990s, the crime rate in Argentina doubled: from 173.8 crimes for every 10,000 people in 1990 to 305.1 cases for every 10,000 people in 2000, peaking at 369.7 in 2002 and decreasing to 350.4 in 2003 (INDEC). Lucía Dammert has studied the relationship between the growth of criminal violence and the expansion of gated communities in Argentinian cities. According to her, "an immediate and unconscious relation amongst city, public space and criminality has been established. This constant relation results in a gradual abandonment of public spaces and a search for security in new types of settlements" (Dammert, 2001: 9).

The influence of globalisation on the polarisation process and the appearance of a global culture seem to justify the need for social differentiation between winners and losers, as reviewed in this sub-section. The spread of foreign investments accompanies the trend of the global culture and produces a multiplication of gated communities in worldwide cities. Moreover, the retreat of the state from the provision of basic services leads to increasing urban crime and the privatisation of



security, amongst other services, encouraging several types of private security measures, such as fences, guards, alarms and gated communities. The two groups of structural causes associated with the worldwide spread of gated communities reviewed in this sub-section are essential for the understanding of the fortifying-up phenomenon. Structural causes are relevant to this thesis since they influence the social practices and viewpoints of the social actors. Nevertheless, not all affluent and upper-middle class families choose to live in a gated community, which indicates there are also subjective causes influencing their decisions.

#### **2.4.2. Subjective causes**

Subjective causes of the expansion of gated communities are considered as conditions resulting from individuals' desires, interests, viewpoints and opportunities. This sub-section reviews the main five subjective causes suggested by the literature. These are: a) increasing fear of crime; b) search for a better lifestyle; c) search for a sense of community; d) search for social homogeneity; and e) search for a higher social status<sup>19</sup> and social distinction within particular social groups. The analysis of subjective causes and the reasons why families decide to move to this type of residential settlement are significant to this thesis. Similarly to structural causes, they allow an understanding of the social practices and viewpoints of gated communities' residents.

a) The first subjective cause is fear of crime. According to the literature on gated communities, the main driving force for their multiplication is the increase of crime and chiefly the growth of fear of crime. Fear of crime, which refers to the citizens' perception of crime, constitutes the individual response to the increase of urban crime. It is related to the perceived state's withdrawal from the provision of security. Citizens feel more insecure and consider the state is not able to provide them security. Those who can solve this problem by private means decide to move to safer places like gated communities. Therefore, as stated by Blakely and Snyder, "the newest form of fortified community... places security and protection as its primary feature" (Blakely & Snyder, 1997b: 2). These scholars show how fear of crime results in an increasing process of gating-up as an apparent solution to crime even

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<sup>19</sup> Social status is used in this thesis as the interviewed actors used this concept, referring to a high position in the social structure. This is further analysed in Chapter 6.

when it is not related to an increase of crime figures (Blakely & Snyder, 1997a). For Robert Helsey and William Strange “gated communities are at least in part a response to the fear of crime, real or imagined, and to understand them it is necessary to understand the specifics of the market for security” (Helsey & Strange, 1999: 81). Georjeanna Wilson-Doenges (2000) found out in her research that there is not always a direct correlation between increasing crime rates and increasing fear of crime. The latter appears overvalued in comparison to crime rates. Dammert talks about a crisis of urban security in Argentina. However, she explains that “fear of crime in the population has no direct relation to victimisation<sup>20</sup>, as the vast majority of the urban population considers that the probability of being a victim is higher than 75 percent, whilst indices of denounced crime reach, in the worst case, 50 percent” (Dammert, 2001: 6). She argues: “Although literature on fear in other countries has found that the population tends to feel more secure in places where they live, this situation is not reflected in the Argentinian case analysed, where less than 30 percent of the population feels secure in the neighbourhood where it dwells” (Ibid.: 7).

The review of the literature dealing with fear of crime as one of the subjective causes of the development of gated communities shows that this is one of the most important influencing elements. Probably because of this, it has received more scholarly attention than other subjective causes.

b) Security represents the possibility to have a better lifestyle without the worries of crime. The search for a better lifestyle is another important reason to move to a gated community. It does not only refer to having security, but also to better living conditions. Gated communities are offered in the real estate market as places different from the city, where it is possible to have closer contact with nature as well as larger houses and plots, in addition to social amenities.

Gated communities represent “a green lifestyle” (Svampa, 2001). Caldeira, who analyses gated communities advertisements in São Paulo, also emphasises the green aspect of gated communities: “Ads refer to the natural setting of the development, with green areas, parks, and lakes, and use phrases with ecological appeal... [and] by

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<sup>20</sup> Victimisation is understood as the process of being victim of a crime (Dammert, 2001).

making appeals to ecology, health, order, leisure, and, of course, security, the ads present the closed condominiums as the antithesis to the chaos, dirt, and danger of the city” (Caldeira, 2000: 265). The image of the city appears then as the opposite of good lifestyle, while gated communities appear as “doors to paradise” (Svampa, 2001). This is the reason for considering gated communities as a way to avoid city problems. Gated communities look like “anti-city” since “the underlying philosophy implies that there is a paradisaal order within their limits, whereas there is chaos outside” (Cabrales Barajas & Canosa Zamora, 2001: 249).

These authors indicate that gated communities offer the possibility of achieving a greener and better lifestyle, which is different from the urban lifestyle, despite this type of residential developments been located in urban areas. However, the achievement of a truly better life quality does not always happen as some gated communities do not possess large green areas and are located in dense urban areas. In relation to this subjective cause, the literature usually does not give enough relevance to the existence of amenities and social infrastructure within gated communities for the possibility of getting not only a better lifestyle, but also a different and more exclusive one. Caldeira (2000) is one exception on this point as she explains that the possibility of having a better and more comfortable lifestyle in gated communities is related to the existence of amenities and the provision of all kinds of services within these closed settlements.

c) The improved lifestyle in gated communities is not only related to having more security, services, facilities and large green areas, but also to the possibility of achieving a sense of community. The latter constitutes, according to the literature, the third subjective cause for the development of gated communities. The discussion on community and sense of community has received important attention within the literature on gated communities. Firstly, because it is part of the wording of the concept of gated community. Secondly, as a result of the frequently discussed topic of whether there has been or not a “decline of community”.

Blakely and Snyder’s concept of community in gated communities is based on the idea that “community implies sharing: usually a shared territory, certainly shared experiences or social interactions, and also shared traditions, institutions, common

goals or purposes, and political or economic structures. It implies not just a feeling of community, but participation in the social life of a place, and often also the political and economic life, because of a sense of shared destiny within the territorial community” (Blakely & Snyder, 1997a: 32). The sense of community is territorially based on the neighbourhood. Thus, “neighbourhood as community also includes a sense of mutual responsibility, significant interaction, and cooperative spirit” (Ibid.: 34). This thesis agrees on the concept of community suggested by Blakely and Snyder since it is all-embracing: social interactions, common purposes and the territorial base are emphasised. This concept draws upon the concept of community as elaborated by Ferdinand Tönnies (1955).

Zygmunt Bauman has also studied the concept of community and its relationship with the concept of gated communities. According to him: “In a community, we all understand each other well, we may trust what we hear, we are safe most of the time and hardly ever puzzled or taken aback. We are never strangers to each other” (Bauman, 2001: 2). He does not refer to the territorial base of community, but to security, trust, understanding and familiarity amongst its members. He adds: “There is a price to be paid for the privilege of ‘being in a community’... The price is in the currency of freedom... Missing community means missing security; gaining community... would soon mean missing freedom” (Ibid.: 4). To him: “The heavily guarded, electronically surveyed ‘gated communities’... are ‘communities’ in name only” (Ibid.: 54) since their residents want to escape from community and want to be free.

Gated communities appear in the literature as places that encourage a sense of community in the context of a decrease of community in city life: “The decline in (sic) sense of community has sent Americans searching for this lost prize. Developers and marketers of communities see this need and are attempting to meet it. One way to do this is to develop gated communities” (Wilson-Doenges, 2000: 599).

This argument of a declined or lost sense of community is based on the idea of a neighbourhood where residents know each other and have close relationships as well as are related to a lively street atmosphere. Setha Low expresses: “Gated community

residents are interested in 'community', but a specific kind of community that includes protecting children and keeping out crime and strangers whilst at the same time controlling the environment and the quality of services. The 'community' they are searching for is one imagined from childhood or some idealized past" (Low, 2003: 230). This argument reinforces the link, already explained by Bauman, between community and control and security given by gated communities' walls and fences. These security devices might foster closer relationships in everyday life and a sense of control over people and more security in the neighbourhood, as further elaborated in Chapters 5 and 6.

The concept of community becomes essential to address the analysis of everyday life in gated communities and the sharing of social practices and viewpoints. The argument that some individuals decide to move to gated communities to find the "lost sense of community" that cannot be found within larger groups might have a direct influence on the viewpoints and social practices they develop within the gated community and outside it, which might encourage urban social group segregation.

d) The search for community within the gated community is also related to the search for social homogeneity, which is the fourth subjective cause of the rise of these residential settlements. This has been emphasised in several studies. Setha Low in her research on gated communities in USA and in Mexico examines what happens when particular areas of the city suffered a change in the social composition of their residents and became mixed neighbourhoods. According to her: "Many interviewees mentioned the changes in the social composition of the surrounding areas [of their formerly 'open neighbourhoods'<sup>21</sup>] as a primary motivation for moving [to gated communities]" (Low, 2000: 9). Svampa (2001) remarks the importance that gated communities' residents give to homogeneity in terms of age and economic level of their residents. Arizaga (2005) explains that the contact among peers reinforces social identity and makes the difference with 'the other', who is outside the walls, more explicit. According to her, closure and social homogeneity of the gated community are essential to finding a place that protects against a world that is always changing. Social homogeneity is preserved, mainly based on socio-economic level.

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<sup>21</sup> By 'open neighbourhoods' the thesis refers to non-gated neighbourhoods. Similar, 'open city' refers to the opposite of gated communities.

In addition, as stated by Svampa (2001), there are many implicit and explicit restrictions to the ability to buy a plot in this type of neighbourhood and many gated communities' residents associations reserve the right to accept or refuse a new member<sup>22</sup>.

e) The search for a higher status and social distinction is the last subjective cause of the rise of gated communities considered in this sub-section. Some individuals move to this type of neighbourhood as it gives them social prestige, amongst other 'benefits'. Caldeira, Svampa, and Blakely and Snyder consider that this type of residential settlement confers status as "they provide the cachet of exclusive living" to middle-class families (Blakely & Snyder, 1997a: 6). This emphasises the fact that gated communities usually include upper-middle class people who regard themselves as having a higher social status. In this context, walls and security devices are not just physical elements that can be dismissed, but they also provide status and distinction. Caldeira calls this situation "aesthetics of security", arguing that "the more ostensibly secure and enclosed the property, the higher its status" (Caldeira, 2000: 295). She notes that "the construction of status symbols is a process that elaborates social differences and creates means for the assertion of social distance and inequality" (Ibid.: 258). The walls are, therefore, the first element to make this social distance explicit. Svampa (2004) considers living in gated communities within the group of strategies of distinction, like practising exclusive sports, having the membership to selected clubs and attending exclusive schools. The issues of acquiring a higher status and social homogeneity are relevant to this thesis since they might justify particular social practices aiming to get distinction and, consequently, leading to urban social group segregation.

The analysis of the subjective causes of the arrival of gated communities allows a more comprehensive understanding of this urban phenomenon. They are important because they might encourage particular social practices and viewpoints of their residents.

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<sup>22</sup> See footnote 10.

This section has reviewed structural and subjective causes of the development of gated communities which are relevant to this thesis for three reasons: Firstly, they allow for a better comprehension of the process of fortifying-up showing the two types of drivers, which are interrelated, and both influence their multiplication. Secondly, they bring to light some of the reasons that might justify particular social practices and viewpoints of gated communities' residents. Thirdly, they provide a clear base to understand the consequences of the spread of gated communities.

## **2.5. Consequences of the rise of gated communities**

Following the argument that “*spatial configurations produce effects*”<sup>23</sup> (Massey, 1999: 162), gated communities constitute a complex urban phenomenon and their development has provoked different types of consequences, which have received considerable academic attention. There are positive and negative effects and can be analysed according to the sphere they influence. Thus, there are spatial, economic, political and social consequences. The purpose of this section is to review the positive and negative transformations that gated communities provoke in the urban space as well as in the economic, political and social spheres to get an all-embracing understanding of the process of gating up. Although different types of consequences of gated communities according to the literature on the subject are reviewed in this chapter, the social sphere is highlighted and treated in a different sub-section as it constitutes the most relevant realm for this thesis.

### **2.5.1. Spatial, economic and political consequences**

In relation to the consequences on the urban space, the most important positive effects identified by the literature are the provision of services and infrastructure to areas formerly not well equipped (Salcedo & Torres, 2004) and the creation of spaces with high environmental quality (Cabrales Barajas & Canosa Zamora, 2001). The negative impacts refer to the closure of streets, hindrance of emergency services (Landman, 2000), fragmentation of urban space as well as the loss of a liveable urban centre (Low, 2003).

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<sup>23</sup> Italics in original.

The economic impacts of gated communities refer chiefly to effects on the housing and land market as well as on the local economy as a consequence of their development. The attraction of new services and infrastructure for the gated communities' residents can improve the local economy (Sabatini & Salcedo, 2005) and increase property values (Lemanski, 2005). Gated communities also work as engines for low-skilled jobs (Svampa, 2001; Salcedo & Torres, 2004) and increase tax revenues for the local governments (Le Goix, 2005). However, they can also have negative economic consequences like potentially fewer revenues since some gated communities refuse to pay taxes to the local government as they do not get services from it (McKenzie, 1994). They might also imply higher costs for their residents since they have to pay monthly charges for maintenance and security (Landman, 2000). Finally, they might make property values in non-gated surrounding neighbourhoods to decrease (Le Goix, 2005).

Regarding the positive political effects, the most significant ones are the exercise of political participation and civil engagement within the gated community (Lang & Danielsen, 1997) and the fact that the state has fewer responsibilities and fewer problems to attend (Cabrales Barajas & Canosa Zamora, 2001). Other authors have argued about the political and economic advantages for gated communities' residents to organise themselves for the provision of services and shared consumption agreements following the economic theory of clubs (Foldvary, 1994; Webster, 2001; Lee & Webster, 2006). However, other authors have found that gated communities do not increase participation (Blakely & Snyder, 1997). Moreover, homeowner associations function as corporations whose main objective is the protection of property values and are run by managers (McKenzie, 1994). Gated communities also reinforce private laws, known as "covenants, conditions and restrictions" (McKenzie, 1994; Judd, 1995). Finally, the literature mentions the privatisation of public spaces through the use of walls and fences that prevent public access (Caldeira, 2000) and the undermining of the concepts of democracy and citizenship because "among the conditions necessary for democracy is that people acknowledge those from different social groups to be co-citizens, having similar rights despite their differences. However, cities segregated by walls and enclaves foster the sense that different groups belong to separate universes and have irreconcilable claims. Cities of walls do not strengthen citizenship but rather contribute to its corrosion" (Caldeira, 2000:



334). The undemocratic character of gated communities has been pointed out because of the use of covenants, conditions and restrictions that rule life inside the gated community, which in many cases are very intrusive (Blakely & Snyder, 1997; Judd, 1995).

Having mentioned the consequences of the development of gated communities on the spatial, economic and political spheres, the next sub-section focuses on their social consequences.

### **2.5.2. Social consequences of the rise of gated communities**

Social consequences of gated communities refer to the effects that this type of residential settlement produces on society, evidencing power relations, as well as ethnic, class and gender differences. They have received considerable attention amongst researchers<sup>24</sup>. The reviewed literature identifies four main social consequences: a) enhancement of a sense of community; b) stimulation of social tensions between inside and outside; c) elaboration of the otherness as dangerous; and d) encouragement of urban social segregation. Only the first one is considered as a positive consequence.

a) Concerning the fostering of a sense of community, Arizaga explains in relation to gated communities' residents: "The need for building a belonging group... makes the idea of the bubble (understood as a space isolated from reality) to take on an explicit positive meaning with social integration mentioned only as related to the belonging group" (Arizaga, 2005: 91). Svampa (2001) does not refer to a sense of community, but to how social relations develop within gated communities. According to her, there is a process of "forced socialisation" as seclusion encourages stronger relations amongst people inside this type of neighbourhood. This happens especially in gated communities with important sport amenities, as people share more activities. She also suggests that moving to a gated community might lead to a weakening in previous friendships and social relations, mainly because of the travel distance to and from peripheral gated communities.

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<sup>24</sup> Some scholars are reviewed in this section, whilst others are reviewed in Section 2.6.



Many scholars have questioned the idea that this type of settlement contributes to develop a sense of community. Wilson-Doenges (2000) shows that there is no sense of community different from the one that could exist in the “open city” and that high-income neighbourhoods have a lower sense of community than low-income estates. Jo Beall states: “in neither case, in our research [on gated communities in Johannesburg], was there much evidence of a sense of deep community resulting from proximate living” (Beall *et al.*, 2002: 183). The position of other researchers on this issue is similar: “In gated communities, the walls are there to sharply delineate status and provide security, rather than signify a collective understanding amongst equals” (Lang & Danielsen, 1997: 870). Thus, the literature indicates there is no agreement on whether gated communities contribute to the enhancement of a sense of community within the walls or not. It might be that other elements, like similar interests, or being located far away from other urban settlements, have to be present for the sense of community to be reinforced.

b) The emergence of gated communities may bring about social tensions between gated communities’ residents and neighbours from the surrounding local areas. These conflicts relate to the closure of streets and the privatisation of space as well as the provision of services in the area. Class differences might be a driver for conflicts. As stated by Steve Pile, “the visible exclusiveness of such neighbourhoods intensifies resentment against them, and against the people within them” (Pile *et al.*, 1999: 2-3). Nevertheless, David Castell in his research on gated communities in London did not find any social conflict between inside and outside residents: “...whilst the two populations rarely mix at any level, they co-exist with remarkably few tensions” (Castell, 1997: 83). The significance of this statement indicates precisely that the lack of conflicts can also result from total lack of interaction between inside and outside residents. This topic is significant for the thesis as it might indicate a process of segregation by gated communities’ residents. It is related to the next consequence mentioned in the literature, which has been extensively analysed.

c) Gated communities might create a symbolic barrier between residents and non-residents by emphasising the social differences between the two groups. “The other”, considered as the one who lives in the surrounding area, might be underestimated or thought of as potentially dangerous. Low explains that in USA “gating exacerbates

this tendency to monitor and be concerned about 'marked' intruders by creating a kind of 'pure space' for residents... Gating also involves the 'rationalisation' of space, in which the representation and definition of 'other' is based on human biological characteristics, particularly racial categories" (Low, 2003: 143).

Charlotte Lemanski analyses the perceptions of citizens (mainly whites) living in a gated community called Silvertree Estate in Cape Town, South Africa, and of its poorer neighbours (a mix of Black Africans and Coloured) who live in Westlake Village. She finds that the residents of the poorer neighbourhood feel "unwanted" and "rejected" from the area because they diminish "the standard of the area, in particular in decreasing property prices and increasing crime" (Lemanski, 2005: 14). Lemanski adds that "these negative perceptions expressed by Westlake Village are matched by Silvertree Estate residents' perceptions of superiority towards Westlake Village and its inhabitants" (Ibid.: 14).

Lang and Danielsen (1997) argue that people develop a sense of very hard lines and divisions between inside and outside, between their peers and the others, based on the explicitness of social differences in terms of class or ethnic belonging between the inside group and the outside communities. Arizaga explains that "the others" involve two different social groups. One group is the "service proletariat" that works within the walls of the gated community. It comprises security guards, home-helps and gardeners; and, although it makes social distance between inside residents and service proletariat deeper, it is necessary for the functioning of the residential settlement. The second group refers to the outside surrounding communities and is usually defined by the social contrast with the inside community. The outside community is considered "under the figure of the petty criminal par excellence" (Arizaga, 2005: 178), but also as the charity target of gated communities' population. Charity work is justified through ethic and religious values of helping people in need (Arizaga, 2005). Svampa (2001) makes a similar analysis of the social groups involved.

d) Finally, some literature considers the fostering of urban social segregation, particularly through the construction of physical barriers that prevent interaction between inside and outside social groups, creating exclusive enclaves only afforded

by upper-class citizens. Angela Giglia considers that “what is new in the current processes of auto-segregation carried out by middle- and upper-class groups are their implications regarding socio-spatial integration, redefinition of proximity ties and processes of identification related to the urban territory... Today, as never before, auto-segregation significantly contributes to doubt about the identity of cities as recognised entities that have shared meanings” (Giglia, 2001: 8).

Urban social segregation is the most frequent mentioned social impact of gated communities within the examined literature. It might be the condition that leads to conflicts between inside and outside communities, with the latter considered as dangerous. The examination of whether there is a clear relationship between urban social segregation and gated communities constitutes the centre of this literature review, as explained in Chapter 1, and is further discussed in Section 2.6.

These two sub-sections have reviewed the most significant positive and negative impacts of the development of gated communities according to the literature. The focus is on the social consequences and particularly on the process of segregation. There has been an extensive discussion on whether gated communities contribute to fostering a sense of community or not. However, the examined literature does not allow for a clear argument on this. Furthermore, there seems to be a predominance of negative effects of gated communities. The existence of conflicts between inside and outside residents has also been mentioned as a social consequence and constitutes a significant topic for the thesis since conflicts might influence how social relations and social interactions between “insiders”<sup>25</sup> and “outsiders” develop. The encouragement of urban social segregation is further discussed in Section 2.6 since it appears as the most important social consequence of the arrival of gated communities.

## **2.6. Gated communities and urban social segregation**

This section reviews the main arguments that link gated communities with segregation to identify whether there is a clear relationship between these two concepts and how it can be explained. To understand this link, it is necessary to

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<sup>25</sup> Hereafter, otherwise stated, “insiders” refers to gated communities’ residents; whereas “outsiders” refers to the members of the surrounding local communities.

distinguish two different types of segregation: segregation in the city and segregation of a particular social group. They are both closely connected, with the latter contributing to the former. This distinction is not particularly made in the literature, but it is significant to this thesis because it is necessary to do a micro-level analysis to explain segregation by gated communities' residents.

The thesis argues that urban social segregation refers to a process of segregation in the city that concerns the urban society as a whole and is reflected in different social groups living in different city areas. In contemporary societies, this process responds mainly to macro-level phenomena such as globalisation, economic restructuring, the withdrawal of the state from services' provision, and the implementation of structural adjustment policies and, consequently, the rise of inequalities and social polarisation, as considered within the group of reviewed structural causes. However, individual elements such as interests and values also influence this process. The city is the scale of analysis of urban social segregation.

It is frequently argued that gated communities are used in the production of inequality within cities (Massey, 2005). They appear as an extreme example of residential choice that reflects urban social segregation: "...gated communities have created a new housing option for some of us, but they have also created a new societal dilemma for all of us. The purpose of gates and walls is to limit social contact, and reduced social contact may weaken the ties that form the social contract" (Blakely & Snyder, 1997a: 137). Paulo Rodrigues Soares adds: "The total disconnection of these exclusive settlements...with the consolidated urban fabric represents... the reinforcement of spatial segregation and the formation of privatised islands in the interior of an already fragmented urban fabric" (Rodrigues Soares, 2002: 573).

The second phenomenon refers, according to this thesis, to urban social group segregation, meaning the separation or isolation of a group that segregates itself from the rest of the city or from other social groups owing to its social practices, values, power, interests and perceptions. It is influenced by individual and structural elements and the scale of analysis is at the group level. This type of segregation has been partially incorporated in the analysis of urban social segregation by the

reviewed authors. According to Caldeira, from the 1980s social segregation in São Paulo, Brazil, has led to “a new pattern of spatial segregation” where “different social groups are again closer to one another but are separated by walls and technologies of security, and they tend not to circulate or interact in common areas. The main instrument for this new pattern of spatial segregation is what I call ‘fortified enclaves’” (Caldeira, 2000: 213).

As previously explained, the object of study of the literature dealing with urban social segregation is the city and, fundamentally, macro-processes; whereas in the case of urban social group segregation the object of study focuses on one (or more) social group and its practices, opinions, and values that lead to its separation from society as a whole or from other social groups. Urban social group segregation is central to this thesis. However, most literature, as reviewed, does not distinguish between these two concepts and usually refers only to urban social segregation.

Considering the group of scholars who have studied gated communities and urban social segregation, it is possible to distinguish two different views:

1. Those who argue that gated communities encourage urban social segregation.
2. Those who argue that gated communities do not encourage urban social segregation.

It is worth noting that although some of these arguments refer to social groups, there is no systematic analysis differentiating urban social group segregation from urban social segregation. The former is not defined by the literature and therefore this thesis works on this concept in Chapter 3. The analysis starts by explaining Argument 1.

#### **2.6.1. Argument 1: Gated communities encourage urban social segregation**

Most of the literature that discusses the link between gated communities and urban social segregation says that the latter derives from the expansion of these settlements. The difficulty of not distinguishing between urban social segregation and urban social group segregation makes explanations unclear. Most authors analyse the two types of segregation together and consequently it is complicated to separate them in

this review. Moreover, both structural and individual elements influencing segregation are present, however, scholars usually do not give the same emphasis to both types of elements. This section reviews the literature that sustains that gated communities encourage segregation and indicates that segregation has, according to some authors, negative and positive impacts.

Setha Low (2000) mentions “increasing class separation” and “cutting off relationships with neighbours” referring to social divisions. She does not give a precise definition of segregation and simply refers to “insulation” and “social splitting” (Low, 2003). According to her, “residential segregation is created by prejudice and socioeconomic disparities, but reinforced by planning practices and policing, implemented by zoning laws and regulations, and subsidised by businesses and banks” (Low, 2000: 4). For her, gated communities contribute to segregation because “during periods of economic decline and social stress, middle-class people become anxious about maintaining their social status... Social splitting offers a strategy that is reinforced by cultural stereotypes and media distortions, allowing people to psychologically separate themselves from people who they perceive as threatening their tranquillity and neighbourhood stability. The walls and gates of the community reflect this splitting physically as well as metaphorically, with ‘good’ people (the good part of us) inside, and the ‘bad’ remaining outside” (Low, 2003: 139). Low’s explanation identifies subjective factors such as social actors’ attitudes, perceptions and desires, as well as structural conditions, such as economic crises, media influence and increasing urban crime.

David Castell also considers structural and subjective factors influencing urban segregation. He studies a gated community in London and the relation of its residents with the outside community. His findings show significant differences between the residents of the gated community and the outside residents in terms of age, social class and housing tenure as well as pointing out the lack of interaction between the two groups. Castell states that “...there seems to be little physical contact between the two groups, but it is also suggested that this is partly the result of lack of opportunity. People who move into Bow Quarter [the analysed gated community] have to live with physical design and management practices that, deliberately or not, exclude outsiders. Just because they live in such an environment does not necessarily mean

that they all agree with these exclusionary practices or passively accept a protected life within their walls. And when some of them do venture out into Bow [the local area], they find little to make them stay. Alternatively, it may be the case that both sets of people are eyeing each other suspiciously and deciding to keep their distance” (Castell, 1997: 74).

Castell’s argument means that although gated communities might encourage urban social group segregation, this is due to the facilities they provide and their physical design and not a result of the residents’ intentions. The author finds that residents do not go outside since there are no attractive services or infrastructure. However, he admits that the separation between “insiders” and “outsiders” could also be considered a result of people’s attitudes. Castell does not provide a definition of segregation, which seems merely to refer to separation. It is worth noting, however, that he analyses the social practices of gated communities’ residents leading to segregation, which is relevant to this thesis. He examines shopping, recreation, sports and work.

Maristella Svampa (2001) refers to “auto-segregation” and “spatial segregation”, as well as “social fracture” when examining segregation. Aiming to clarify the relation between residents of gated communities in Buenos Aires and the outside communities, she studies the opinions (or viewpoints as this thesis considers them) of gated communities’ residents about their surrounding poor neighbours. She finds that many of the former have hostile attitudes to the latter. The “others”, who are the people outside and especially the neighbours of the surrounding local areas, are perceived as strangers and potential aggressors by gated communities’ residents. Physical barriers are used to establish not only physical distance, but also social and symbolic distance. The separation established between “insiders” and “outsiders” influences the construction of social relations. Svampa argues that gated communities’ residents have scarce contacts with the surrounding neighbours. Most of these contacts are through charity work. This scholar also analyses the homogeneity of social groups of children and teenagers from gated communities, finding hardly common spaces for interaction between them and local teenagers. She talks about the collapse of the “old mode of socialisation” based on social mix and heterogeneity that characterised the Argentinian society especially in the second half



of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the change towards more homogeneous social circles within gated communities (Svampa, 2001).

Researching on gated communities in Santiago de Chile, Diego Campos and Carmen García find that “the location of a gated community leads to closer [physical] proximity between groups that are socially and economically different; however, this proximity does not necessarily suppose knowledge of or relation with the ‘outsider’. On the contrary, the latter is little by little displaced from his/her original environment by the new settlements” (Campos & García, 2004: 197). According to these authors, gated communities favour separation of different social groups living in the same area. Francisca Sellés and Loreto Stambuk reinforce this idea of the physical distance between the gated community and the poor area being minimal, “almost inexistent, because only a wall creates the separation. What is obvious is the social distance between both parts, thereby producing a duality which is characterised by fragmentation and little communication between both worlds” (Sellés & Stambuk, 2004: 241). These findings contradict the ideas of other scholars from Chile who argue that there is a reduction in the geographical scale of segregation, which implies closer relationships between different social groups, as explained later by Argument 2.

Blakely and Snyder (1997a) argue that gated communities encourage segregation and that the latter has a variety of negative impacts, especially when referred to low-income residents<sup>26</sup>, such as reduced opportunities for their residents, concentration of deprivation, greater vulnerability to economic downturns and separation and isolation, not just from other members of society, but often also from jobs, adequate public services and good schools. It is relevant here to note that segregation has negative impacts when examined at the city level since some groups are excluded from mainstream society. Nevertheless, when considered as a micro-level process examining the dynamics of the social groups involved, urban social group segregation might have not only negative consequences, but also positive consequences. Some authors (Blauw, 1991; Greenstein *et al.*: 2000) who study segregation, although not in relation to gated communities, argue that segregation

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<sup>26</sup> As explained in Section 2.3, these authors consider the existence of low-income gated communities.

might preserve customs and lifestyles and strengthen social and identity ties through the development of networks of reciprocity and help, especially in the case of migrants. Following this argument, it might be possible to say that urban social group segregation might allow gated communities' residents to reinforce their social homogeneity and to achieve a higher sense of community and protect themselves from what they perceive as violent and dangerous situations of the "open city", as already discussed in Section 2.4.

Finally, Charlotte Lemanski also analyses segregation in relation to the expansion of gated communities in South Africa, but she does not provide a definition of the former. She takes an intermediate position between the two arguments discussed in this Section 2.6. Her research findings refer to perceptions between gated communities' residents and their surrounding neighbours. According to her, "the Silvertree [gated community]-Westlake [poor neighbourhood] interface is complex in that it hosts both spaces of exclusivity and connection" (Lemanski, 2005: 25). The inaccessibility to the poor neighbourhood, in addition to the walls, the inexistence of neighbourly feelings and the attitudes of indifference and negativity from the gated community's residents towards poor residents may manifest segregation. But on the contrary, activities carried out by a local NGO working with different social groups living in the area and the existence of employment relationships between gated communities' residents who employ residents of the poor neighbourhood represent "spaces of connection" (Ibid.).

Lemanski's findings have been considered within Argument 1 since, despite the elements of integration she identifies, she also finds signs of segregation, such as the layout of the settlement, restriction to access and the disapproving opinions of the affluent neighbours about the poor community. Employment is identified as one element that might favour integration. Nevertheless, she explains, it does not mean a relation between equals, but of superiority from the affluent residents' side (Ibid.). Similarly to aforementioned scholars, Lemanski considers segregation as a consequence of subjective elements like opinions and perceptions from the different actors involved, as already mentioned, as well as of structural factors, like planning regulations (the master plan of the gated community) and different power relations

between rich and poor neighbours. This author focuses on the group as the object of analysis.

The scholars reviewed within Argument 1 have elaborated the reasons why gated communities foster urban social segregation. However, the evidence on how the relationship between gated communities and urban social segregation takes place is not clear or limited. It is therefore essential to go further to understand how the two concepts interact. In addition, the second problem evidenced in this sub-section is the lack of a distinction between the concepts of urban social segregation and urban social group segregation within the literature. The difference in the scale of analysis is confused or not acknowledged. The thesis argues that an examination at the group level is needed to understand the relationship between segregation and gated communities. By elaborating on the concept of urban social group segregation in relation to gated communities in Chapter 3, the thesis seeks to make this differentiation clearer.

#### **2.6.2. Argument 2: Gated communities do not encourage urban social segregation**

The second group of scholars discussing the relationship between gated communities and urban social segregation argues that the former do not contribute to segregation. Working on case studies from Chile, Francisco Sabatini and Gonzalo Cáceres argue that the pattern of large spatial scale segregation in Latin America is changing towards a process of segregation in a lower but more intense geographical scale: “The multiplication of gated communities that is taking place in Chilean cities is equivalent to a diminishing of residential segregation in a large spatial scale and, simultaneously, to an intensification of segregation in a reduced spatial scale. This reduction of the segregation scale takes place when gated communities are built in the low-income periphery” (Sabatini & Cáceres, 2004: 11). Gated communities are built in areas inhabited by poor residents and therefore they disperse affluent residents in the city. As a result, these scholars reject the idea that gated communities encourage segregation. According to them, “the too rapid interpretation that makes equivalent the appearance of gated communities with an increase in spatial segregation overlooks the fact that physical distances between social groups have

been reduced in these areas of the urban periphery” (Ibid). Sabatini and Cáceres’ argument is evidenced by the analysis of the physical distance between different social groups. Sabatini (Sabatini *et al.*, 2001) has examined segregation not only in relation to gated communities, but as a spatial phenomenon and has identified three dimensions for its study, which are reviewed in Chapter 3 where spatial sociology is discussed since these ideas related to urban social segregation could be included within that theoretical school.

According to Rodrigo Salcedo and Alvaro Torres, spatial proximity allows poor citizens to integrate with gated communities’ residents based on market relationships like employment or service provision. They explain that “*pobladores* [poor people from nearby neighbourhoods] and gated communities inhabitants share a complex relationship in which the *poblador* evaluates his or her new neighbour in a positive way as a client or employer - in terms of market integration - but in a negative way when discussing the possibilities of community integration”<sup>27</sup> (Salcedo & Torres, 2004: 34-35). Thus, they refer to “functional integration”, acknowledging the difficulties of community integration, as further explained by Sabatini and Salcedo, who argue that “gated communities do not inherently contribute to increase segregation, and that local contexts do matter... [and] gated communities, under certain very specific circumstances, may even help to reduce segregation and prevent the formation of ghettos” (Sabatini & Salcedo, 2005: 9).

Sabatini and Salcedo refer to segregation as “a dialectical relation between integration and exclusion” (Ibid.: 10). They consider four different forms of integration: a) functional integration refers to the inclusion of a person and utilisation of the functional means of exchange, such as power and money; b) symbolic integration, which relates to a sense of belonging of a person to the place where s/he lives; c) community integration relates to the formation of social ties expressed by friendship, solidarity networks and family relations; and d) spatial integration, that is intertwined and included in the previous three dimensions, refers to spatial distance in terms of housing, work and study places, as well as recreational and shopping places (Ibid.). Analysing the opinions of the surrounding poor community, they

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<sup>27</sup> Italics by S.R.

arrive at interesting conclusions (Ibid). Firstly, there is functional integration as some *pobladores* work in the nearby gated communities. These authors counterpoint that gated communities only provide low-skilled jobs since “the existence of those ‘bad jobs’ where they were non existent [jobs] before is a serious improvement in live (sic) conditions of marginal residents, who, for the first time, find work that is not only relatively stable but in addition is close [to] their homes” (Ibid.: 12). Secondly, they argue that the development of gated communities has enlarged the market for local convenience stores and occupations such as carpentry, plumbing and decorating as well as attracted supermarkets and large stores (Ibid.).

Regarding symbolic integration, Sabatini and Salcedo criticise the idea of the wall as a means for increasing the perception of segregation. They argue: “‘*Pobladores*’ recognize an increase in the fear of crime, and thus, they see enclosure and self-protection as something absolutely legitimate, not different from the walls already surround (sic) their own yards, [the] locks on doors and gates, and so forth. In addition, ...‘*pobladores*’ are also convinced that the security measures of gated communities are not intended to target them, but criminals coming from other places...”<sup>28</sup> (Ibid.: 14). They add that “people believe that, now, they are far less stigmatized as poor, dangerous or different than before. In the new situation they live in, wealthy people, even from outside their municipality, know their neighbourhood and consider it a good and decent place to live [in]” (Ibid.: 13). In relation to spatial integration, they say “there is a reduction in the spatial scale of segregation” (Ibid.: 20). Thus, functional and symbolic integration are achieved through this spatial proximity. However, these authors say there is no community integration: “...community relationships, in the way of strong ties and networks, do not exist at all between gated communities residents and ‘*pobladores*’”<sup>29</sup> (Ibid.: 15). Therefore, there is integration and segregation at the same time, which is similar to Lemanski’s argument, reviewed within Argument 1. But they give more emphasis to the former.

The findings of these researchers are relevant as they oppose most literature dealing with gated communities and segregation. According to them, the relations between gated communities’ residents and *pobladores* show integration at levels that benefit

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<sup>28</sup> Italics by S.R.

<sup>29</sup> Italics by S.R.

both sides. There is symbolic integration since *pobladores* feel part of the city and particularly of an area that is improving, and also functional integration because of the new job opportunities. There is also spatial integration due to spatial proximity. However, they acknowledge the absence of community integration. This lack of community integration might be considered as urban social segregation. The fact that these authors distinguish the four types of integration shows that community integration, which is the most fundamental form for this thesis, is not achieved. This leads to argue the validity of their argument about gated communities not encouraging segregation.

It is worth noting that these researchers consider opinions and feelings of the outside community, whereas most literature has only focused on the viewpoints of gated communities' residents. An all-embracing analysis of the social consequences of gated communities should consider both sides: inside and outside residents. It is also relevant to mention that several authors (Svampa; Low; Castell; Lemanski; Sabatini & Salcedo) have analysed opinions as an element to examine segregation. Arizaga (2005), who does not refer explicitly to segregation, also analyses opinions and representations of gated communities' residents. However, the concepts of "opinions" or "feelings" are not defined in the reviewed body of literature.

Finally, a research carried out in Montevideo, Uruguay, needs to be considered within this second argument. María José Álvarez examines residential and social segregation owing to the emergence of gated communities, and argues that "gated communities have not increased residential segregation in this city" (Álvarez, 2005: 7). She supports her argument by analysing residential and class trajectories<sup>30</sup> of gated communities' residents. According to her, "residents of gated communities are a very homogeneous group in age, family stage, and class" (Ibid.: 9). She argues that "not surprisingly, residential and social segregation do overlap in gated communities of Uruguay.... already existing social and residential segregation facilitates the move to gated communities. Gated communities in Montevideo are more similar to other processes of affluence segregation than many would assume. For residents, moving

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<sup>30</sup> Although the author does not provide a definition of 'class trajectories', it is implicit that the concept refers to Bourdieu's notion concerning the evolution in relation to the position in the social structure. See Bourdieu (1986).

to a gated community implies more a rise in their already high degree of segregation than a qualitative rupture with the city” (Ibid.: 11). Although Alvarez’s argument is considered within this second group of scholars as she sustains that gated communities do not encourage segregation, it could be argued that it shows that gated communities contribute to maintain segregation at the city level through their physical attributes.

This section has examined two opposing arguments on the relationship between gated communities and urban social segregation. The evidence found on this relationship is not sufficient to provide an answer to the first central question posed in Chapter 1. There is no agreement on how this relationship can be explained. The literature on Argument 1 shows social divisions and lack of interactions related to the development of gated communities. The researchers reviewed in Argument 2 point out that the arrival of gated communities brings about physical, functional and symbolic integration, but fails to provide community integration. Exploring the reasons for this failure at the community level could be useful as it represents the most complex type of integration and is related to social values. The change in the spatial scale of segregation has to be considered carefully since spatial proximity does not necessarily evolve into community integration and conversely could make segregation even worse. As Doreen Massey noted: “The coming-together of differences spatially can generate new mixtures or new divisive hostilities: ‘space’ can promote contact or be used to divide” (Massey, 1999: 165). The construction of walls surrounding gated communities might signify that there is not intention to reduce social distance.

Both arguments identify the existence of subjective and structural elements encouraging or not segregation. However, scholars do not give the same importance to both groups. This thesis argues that both groups of elements seem relevant for the analysis of the process of segregation and should receive equal importance. Furthermore, this thesis considers that the link between gated communities and segregation is not yet clear in the literature. Although some authors consider group dynamics, there is no distinction between urban social segregation and urban social group segregation. The analysis of micro-scale segregation would make it easier to identify this relationship. To be able to distinguish between these two types of

segregation, Chapter 3 reviews how segregation has been analysed by two schools of thought. However, before passing to that chapter it is convenient to summarise the main ideas of this chapter.

## **2.7. Conclusions**

This chapter has focused on the phenomenon of gated communities, showing how it has multiplied in many Latin American cities and consequently attracted academic attention over the last decades. Due to their development, especially in Argentina, their supply has diversified and it is currently possible to discuss a typology of this type of settlement. However, gated communities are not a particular phenomenon in Latin America, but in most regions. This chapter has reviewed how research carried out in different countries around the world has defined this object of study. The review indicates the existence of different conceptualisations of this type of residential development, which makes comparisons very difficult. Thus, this thesis argues the need to elaborate a comprehensive and universal definition of gated communities that could be applied to any settlement, making comparative analyses possible.

The examination of causes of the arrival of gated communities identified two groups of causes: structural and subjective. The former are mainly related to economic, social and political factors, whereas the latter concern social actors' desires and interests to live in this type of residential settlement. However, both types of causes are related and influence one another. Spatial, economic and political consequences examined by the literature have been analysed. But the focus of the analysis is on the social consequences of the development of gated communities. According to the literature, urban social segregation appears as one of the most important social consequences and thus might lead to make clear the existence of a relationship between urban social segregation and gated communities.

The review of the literature that analyses this relationship identifies the existence of two opposing arguments: one saying that gated communities foster segregation, whilst the other sustains that gated communities do not encourage segregation. Both arguments show the relevance of identifying structural and subjective elements



influencing segregation and the difficulty of separating these elements. However, authors do not give them the same relevance. It seems likely that gated communities encourage segregation according to Argument 1. This is reinforced by considering that Argument 2 explains integration is achieved at the spatial, symbolic and functional levels, but not at the community level. Although these two arguments might lead to confirm the existence of a relationship between gated communities and segregation, the latter does not appear clearly since the literature does not provide enough theoretical or empirical evidence on this, neither explains how the process of segregation takes place.

The literature does not differentiate between segregation at the city level and segregation as a social group process and the differences of examining the first or the second concept. This thesis argues that this differentiation becomes essential to clarify the existence (or not) of a relationship between gated communities and segregation. Consequently it is necessary to look at the micro-level dynamics of gated communities' residents and explain how segregation is produced. This requires the elaboration of a definition of urban social group segregation, which has to be included in the conceptual framework explaining the relationship between segregation and gated communities. It is indispensable to explore theoretical approaches to segregation and to establish their suitability for the study of urban social group segregation in gated communities to build this theoretical framework. The next chapter deals with this topic.

### **CHAPTER 3:**

## **URBAN SOCIAL GROUP SEGREGATION: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL PROPOSITION**

### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews two schools of thoughts about segregation and a third social school and their contribution to the understanding of the concept of urban social group segregation. The main objective is to find a theoretical framework that helps to analyse the process of segregation at a micro-level and explains the different elements involved and the relations between them. However, as the concept of urban social group segregation has not been defined by the literature, this chapter reviews the concept of urban social segregation to identify elements that could be applied to the former. The chapter aims to answer the following questions: a) How is urban social segregation explained? And b) How can the concept of urban social segregation help to understand and define the concept of urban social group segregation?

This chapter also aims to develop a conceptual framework to explain the relationship between gated communities and urban social group segregation. Assuming that gated communities are likely to lead to processes of segregation, as was concluded in Chapter 2, it proposes the theoretical and methodological frameworks to confirm the existence of a relationship between these two concepts to explain how segregation occurs. The theoretical framework requires the clarification of four key concepts: gated communities, social practices, viewpoints, and urban social group segregation. The first three concepts appeared in the literature discussed in this and the previous chapter. Nevertheless, their meanings are not comprehensive enough for the analysis of the relationship between living in gated communities and segregation. The fourth concept is elaborated in this chapter for the purpose of the thesis. Social practices and viewpoints are proposed as tools for an understanding of the links between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation. The conceptual framework is based upon ideas discussed in the literature review, especially structuration theory. The elaboration of this framework, along with the research findings, contributes to

the theoretical and methodological debate on gated communities and urban social group segregation.

This chapter is organised in four sections. Section 3.1 examines spatial sociology and the Marxist school. Section 3.2 analyses structuration theory and its suitability for the examining urban social group segregation. Then Section 3.3 analyses the four key concepts of the thesis and Section 3.4 develops the theoretical framework that links these concepts.

### **3.1. Social theories on urban social segregation**

It is possible to identify two main schools of thought concerning urban social segregation. These are ‘spatial sociology’ (reviewed in Sub-section 3.1.1), which mainly emphasises spatial relations in the city, and the ‘Marxist school’ (reviewed in Sub-section 3.1.2) that considers social relations happening at the city level due to structural conditions.

#### **3.1.1. Spatial sociology**

Spatial sociology, as mentioned in Chapter 1, refers to “that part of sociology which employs spatial analysis to elucidate social structures” (Peach, 1975: 5). Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, it has studied segregation in relation to spatial analysis. Members of the Chicago School, like Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, Roderick McKenzie and Louis Wirth, can be considered within spatial sociology. Other scholars, working on spatial analysis, like O. Duncan and B. Duncan, Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton, Michael White and Francisco Sabatini are also considered within this school.

According to the Chicago School, the city is made up of natural areas, which have specific physical and cultural characteristics, the latter being given by their residents. Each area attracts a specific social group and repels other groups. These processes of segregation are based on language, culture, interests, intelligence, personal ambition, and race and “establish moral distances which make the city a mosaic of little worlds which touch but do not interpenetrate” (Park *et al.*; 1970: 40). Processes of competition, domination, invasion and succession, involving individuals and families lead, to a process of segregation of different social groups in different areas of the

city according to their social class. To McKenzie: "As the community grows there is not merely a multiplication of houses and roads but a process of differentiation and segregation takes place as well" (McKenzie, 1970: 73). Louis Wirth explains: "Diverse population elements inhabiting a compact settlement thus tend to become segregated from one another in the degree in which their requirements and modes of life are incompatible with one another and in the measure in which they are antagonistic to one another. Similarly, persons of homogeneous status and need unwittingly drift into, consciously select, or are forced by circumstances into, the same area. The different parts of the city thus acquire specialized functions" (Wirth, 1938: 15). According to him, segregation is a consequence of the antagonistic ways of life that develop in the city.

The spatial analysis of segregation has been very influential, especially in relation to the use of segregation indexes. By 1955, it was proposed that "spatial distances between occupation groups are closely related to their social distances" (Duncan & Duncan, 1975: 63). Later, Douglass Massey and Nancy Denton (1988) emphasised the complexity and multiple dimensions of the process of segregation and suggested analysing it according to different indexes, such as the indexes of dissimilarity, which refers to how social groups are spatially distributed, and of isolation that considers interaction between different groups.

Michael White differentiates between "geographical segregation" and "sociological segregation": "In one sense - the sociological - segregation may mean the absence of interaction amongst social groups. In another sense -the geographic- segregation may mean unevenness in the distribution of social groups across physical space" (White, 1983: 1009). He believes that "the presence of one type of segregation does not necessitate the other... Nonetheless, geographic and sociological segregation are probably correlated" (Ibid.: 1009).

This shows that spatial variables like proximity are relevant to analyse segregation, but have to be complemented with other social variables such as interaction. Sabatini, Cáceres and Cerda suggest that the pattern of spatial segregation is changing from a large spatial scale of segregation to a lower scale, as explained in Section 2.6. They consider that segregation should be examined according to three

variables: physical proximity, interaction and a “subjective dimension”. According to them, “proximity and separation... is what precisely defines residential segregation” (Sabatini *et al.*, 2001: 4). They do not only consider geographical elements, but also the sociological aspects regarding social group composition and perceptions. Thus, they argue that “residential segregation is defined by three main dimensions: (i) the degree of a social group’s spatial concentration in specific areas of the city; (ii) the degree of social homogeneity in residential areas; and (iii) the subjective perception residents have of ‘objective segregation’ (the first two dimensions)” (Ibid.: 3). The third dimension is especially important to this thesis as it provides the possibility for considering segregation not only in terms of spatial proximity and the characteristics of the social groups involved, but also in relation to the perceptions and opinions that both groups have regarding themselves and the other group. These are considered in this thesis as viewpoints and suggested for the analysis of urban social group segregation by gated communities’ residents, as explained later in Section 3.3.

Spatial sociology considers urban social segregation as a multidimensional spatial process happening at the city level and involving the dynamics between different social groups. However, this is not fully satisfactory for a conceptualisation of urban social group segregation since it does not explain how social groups interact and contribute or not towards segregation. Some members within this school recognise that interests and conditions of particular social groups can influence segregation. Nevertheless, the space acquires a relevant role in deciding city processes. Proximity appears as the most important variable to consider segregation, although social aspects have also been suggested to overcome this overstated role of space. Thus, interaction appears as a significant variable that also needs to be considered. Some authors, such as Sabatini, give an important place to space, but also recognise that segregation should consider subjective elements related to the opinions and interests of individuals in each social group involved. The thesis argues that this variable needs to be borne in mind for the examination of urban social group segregation related to the development of gated communities. Some of these elements have also been identified by the Marxist school.

### 3.1.2. Marxist School

This school considers segregation as an urban social process leading to the division of the city into different areas mainly as a result of structural conditions like economic processes, political pressures, and the action of the state, amongst others. Henri Lefebvre and Manuel Castells are two leading Marxist city scholars considered in this sub-section. Other important authors, such as Peter Marcuse, Martha Schteingart and Iris Young<sup>31</sup>, who have particularly examined the process of segregation, are also reviewed.

Lefebvre suggests that the ghetto is the extreme case of segregation mentioning the existence of several types of ghettos, one of them being for affluent people: "...high status people because of wealth or power isolate themselves in ghettos of wealth" (Lefebvre, 1996: 140). There is a constant tension between social integration and social segregation in the urban space. Lefebvre points out this dichotomy by referring to the city as a practice with a double and contradictory character integrating and segregating at the same time: "On the one hand, this social practice is *integrative*. It attempts to integrate its elements and aspects into a coherent whole.... At the same time this society practices *segregation*. It tends (as in the United States) to form ghettos or parking lots, those of workers, intellectuals, students (the campus), foreigners, and so forth..."<sup>32</sup> (Lefebvre, 1996: 144). Similarly to Lefebvre, for Schteingart "the city means contradictory processes of unity and separation, of integration and conflict" (Schteingart, 2001: 26). Segregation refers to "the established spatial and social distance between one part and the rest... [and] it not only exists for the poorest groups, but also in many cases for the affluent" (Ibid.: 17). The identification of segregation as a process concerning affluent citizens is crucial to the thesis, since the usual connotation of segregation refers to deprivation and disadvantageous neighbourhoods (Musterd & de Winter 1998; Wilson, 1987) and the ghetto (Wirth, 1969; Wacquant, 1997).

Schteingart (2001) identifies several causes of segregation that could be organised into structural and subjective causes. Within the former, she considers the influence

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<sup>31</sup> Iris Young was a feminist scholar and can be considered as a post-Marxist, working with a focus on class and inequality and struggles over resources and control. This is why she is considered within the Marxist school.

<sup>32</sup> Italics in original.

of economic and social structures and places job market with its impact on land and the real estate market as important factors. Within the latter, she mentions individuals' preferences and freedom to choose in the market.

For Marcuse social divisions in cities do not constitute a new phenomenon. However, it has new elements that are characteristics of the post-fordist city. Within these elements, it is possible to identify three relevant points related to urban social segregation by affluent citizens: 1) the importance that the identity of the quarter has in its residents' lives; 2) the walls created between quarters and the intensity with which they are defended; and 3) the role of the government, not only acceding to but also promoting city separation in the private interest (Marcuse, 1993). In relation to the latter, he adds that "the role of the state in the contemporary process of spatial separation is also new; it reinforces and hardens the effect of market forces rather than, as has sometimes been the case under various pressures, trying to counter them" (Marcuse, 1997: 229).

Regarding causes that explain segregation, Manuel Castells argues: "Urban segregation does not appear, therefore, as the distribution of the residences of the social groups in space according to a more or less graded scale, but as the expression, at the level of the reproduction of labour power, of the complex and changing relations that determine its modalities" (Castells, 1977: 179). Similarly to Lefebvre, this author mentions social practices as analytical tools for segregation. He considers space as a "social product" that "is always specified by a definite relation between the different instances of a social structure, the economic, the political, the ideological, and the conjuncture of social relations that result from them" (Ibid.: 430). Therefore, "A 'sociology of space' can only be an analysis of social practices given in a certain space, and therefore in a historical conjuncture" (Ibid.: 442). Social practices are a significant concept to this thesis, as explained in Section 3.3.

Iris Young has also identified social practices as instruments to study segregation. She studies residential class segregation, considering them as "practices and processes that tend to homogenize the income and wealth level, occupation status, and lifestyle consumer tastes of communities" (Young, 2002: 210). She adds that "class segregation refers to an entire way of life in which relatively well-off people

can conduct nearly all of their everyday activities insulated from encounters with those less well-off, their faces, their dwellings, their working conditions, and so on... Not only do many desire this sort of privilege and insulated life, but many can fulfil their desire” (Ibid.: 211). Young analyses segregation mainly at the city level. However, she considers group dynamics and provides a definition of social group. According to her, a social group is “the relational outcome of interactions, meanings, and affinities according to which people identify one another” (Ibid.: 228).

Young’s conceptualisation of urban social segregation is relevant since it is considered in terms of social practices of affluent citizens, as well as being a result of their “tastes” and “desires” to be isolated forming homogeneous social groups. This reflects the situation of gated communities’ residents, according to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and points out the individual elements of segregation. Young considers that “residential class segregation is by no means an inevitable consequence of class differences themselves. Indeed, historically many societies have enacted and reinforced hierarchies of privilege, wealth, and leisure through the proximity and interaction of members of upper and lower-classes” (Ibid.). This contribution agrees with other scholars on the fact that segregation is not new and social divisions have existed long ago. The most important point in this definition is the manifestation of proximity and interaction as dimensions of segregation. These two dimensions, already examined in Sub-section 3.1.1, are suggested as important elements for the analysis of segregation in relation to gated communities. Young (2002) identifies negative impacts of class segregation. They refer to political disengagement, lack of communication between different social groups and the dismissal of public space and collective issues regarding urban social life. All of them endanger democracy.

The Marxist school understands space as a social product and a result of social, political and economic processes. Urban social segregation is a complex process happening at the city level that is not only related to the labour reproduction, but also to political and ideological processes. Social practices can be considered as a tool to understand processes of segregation, which is a fundamental aspect to this thesis. Structural causes influence segregation. Nevertheless, scholars also consider interests, tastes and desires of social groups. It is also worth noting the relevance of



proximity and interaction as variables in understanding segregation. This school provides significant elements that might be useful to understand segregation in relation to the expansion of gated communities. Although it considers subjective elements, its drawback is the confined room for action given to individuals to exercise their will and make choices. It focuses mainly on segregation at the city level and not as a micro-level process involving particular social groups driven by their own interests and motivations.

### **3.1.3. Summary of Section 3.1**

This section has reviewed urban social segregation according to spatial sociology and the Marxist school. Both theories provide relevant elements to analyse segregation in relation to gated communities that should be incorporated in a conceptual framework. However, they do not explain fully the driving forces influencing individuals and social groups that need to be considered in a micro-level analysis. They do not give enough importance to the role of individual action in the social dynamics of the city, as is the case of the Marxist school, or have excessively focused on the spatial aspects of segregation and its measurement without explaining the factors contributing to its creation, as is the case of the spatial sociology approach. The analysis of the causes of the arrival of gated communities indicates that both subjective and structural causes are equally important for understanding the process of urban social group segregation. This is the reason for trying to find an alternative theoretical framework. The next section reviews key ideas of structuration theory.

## **3.2. Urban social segregation and structuration theory**

This section reviews the main concepts of structuration theory as a suitable theory to be used for the conceptual framework of the thesis. Sub-section 3.2.1 explains the relevance of using structuration theory to analyse gated communities and urban social group segregation, while Sub-section 3.2.2 reviews the main arguments of this theory.

### **3.2.1. Relevance of structuration theory**

Structuration theory might be a useful theoretical framework to analyse gated communities and urban social group segregation. The justification for this is twofold.

Firstly, this theory provides an explanation of social life influenced by structural and subjective factors. The causes of the development of gated communities can be analysed according to these factors, as elaborated in Chapter 2. Many authors like Jürgen Friedrichs (1998), Terje Wessel (2000), Sako Musterd and Mariële de Winter (1998) have mentioned the confluence of structural causes and the individual's will in the process of segregation. They define this process as a result of what actors do and, at the same time, they acknowledge that their actions are also influenced by structural properties. From Friedrichs' work, Wessel deduces that the patterns of socio-economic segregation should consider structural mechanisms as well as individual actions. Pierre Bourdieu, Roy Bhaskar and Anthony Giddens have shed light on the debate between determinism and voluntarism (Thrift, 1997)<sup>33</sup>. According to Nigel Thrift "the theories put forward by these three individuals have strong differences, but the similarities are... still sufficiently great for these authors to be described as belonging to a structurationist 'school'" (Ibid.: 382). The structuration theory elaborated by Giddens has been suggested by Izhak Schnell (2002) as suitable for the study of urban social segregation. Schnell's ideas are reviewed in Sub-section 3.2.2.

Secondly, the concept of social practices has been identified as one tool to analyse urban social group segregation and gated communities, as explained in the Introduction and as supported by the reviewed literature. Structuration theory considers social practices as one of its key concepts. Some scholars already included in Chapter 2 (Castell, 1997; Svampa, 2001; Salcedo & Torres, 2004; Arizaga, 2003) have analysed social practices of gated communities' residents, although they have not explicitly considered the link between social practices and segregation. Some of these scholars do not use the concept of "social practices" but "activities". However, it is important to distinguish the concepts of "social practices" from merely "practices". To this end, the distinction made by Max Weber about action and social action might be also applicable to practices and social practices. According to this

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<sup>33</sup> The thesis also considered Bourdieu's and de Certeau's theoretical approaches for the analysis of social practices in relation to segregation and living in gated communities. However, it was concluded that Bourdieu's (1990) approach does not give enough room for action to the individuals and therefore it was not the most appropriate theory to explain why gated communities' residents act in a particular way and not otherwise. In the case of de Certeau's, (1984 & 1998) although this author considers the concept of social practices as a central one in his proposition, there is no distinction between individual and structural drivers influencing social dynamics. Therefore, Giddens' theory was considered more appropriate than these two other theoretical approaches.

author, “subjective attitudes constitute social action only so far as they are oriented to the behavior of others” (Weber, 1978: 22). Consequently, social practices are those practices oriented to the behaviour of other social actors. The concept of social practices (or activities) is mainly considered by this literature as an isolated one, which is not included within a theoretical framework explaining how this concept is related to others. The thesis proposes to use structuration theory as the theoretical framework in which to place the concept of social practices in elaborating the link between gated communities and urban social group segregation.

David Castell, in his study of a gated community in London, considers some activities like the use of local facilities by the residents of this closed settlement. He compares the use of on-site facilities with services provided by the outside neighbourhood (off-site services) and concludes that gated communities’ residents “avoid the places where the other residents of the area have to live their day-to-day lives... [They] never venture out into Bow Neighbourhood [the wider neighbourhood]” (Castell, 1997: 70-71). Svampa examines social activities like sports and meetings in the clubhouse and explains that some gated communities encourage a lifestyle based on a sense of community. She adds that “the majority of the ‘new residents’ practises sports on a fairly regular basis and participates in some social activities that little by little configure different groups of belonging” (Svampa, 2001: 141). She also studies consumption as well as working and schooling (Ibid.).

Salcedo and Torres (2004) examine social relationships of gated communities’ residents and socialisation activities. According to them, whilst some people have kept the same groups of friends they had before moving to the gated community, there were some cases where residents had tried to build fresh relationships within their new neighbourhoods. Finally, Arizaga (2003) studies practices and perceptions of teenagers and young people who live in gated communities in Buenos Aires. According to her, these residents rarely visit the city centre and are afraid of getting lost in the underground when they have to go to the city centre, as they are not familiar with the use of public transport. They have closed social groups and do not interact with people who do not live in gated communities.

This sub-section shows that the concept of social practices, previously identified as an element for the analysis of segregation, has been examined in relation to living in gated communities. This concept is a key concept of structuration theory. The next sub-section reviews the key concepts of structuration theory as a theory that might be used to build a theoretical framework that explains the relationship between urban social group segregation and living in gated communities.

### **3.2.2. Structuration theory: key concepts**

Structuration theory is suggested as a social theory useful to explain the phenomenon of urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents since it gives equal importance to subjective and structural factors influencing social life. It also allows analysing segregation at a micro-level focused on the social groups involved and their social practices. Key concepts from structuration theory elaborated by Giddens and interpretations of other scholars (Izhak Schnell, Ira Cohen, Lars Kaspersen, Kenneth Tucker and Ian Craib) for understanding these concepts are reviewed in this sub-section.

Structuration theory is a theoretical framework developed by Giddens. This theory sheds light on how individual actors interact with social systems to reproduce everyday life. Structures, which are considered as rules, such as how things have to be done, and resources held by actors in social relations, appear as the link between human action and society. They influence human action, but at the same time are constrained by it. The concept of social practices suggested in Chapter 1 as a tool for explaining urban social group segregation is a central concept in structuration theory. According to this theory, social practices are not mechanical and it is important to understand the reasons and motivations for them. Some social practices lead to interactions between social actors. The outcome of social practices takes the form of intended or unintended consequences since the actors are not always aware of the results of their actions or the latter are not expected. This is the main argument of structuration theory that needs to be further explained for the understanding of the social consequences of gated communities in terms of urban social group segregation. This requires the review of six key concepts of structuration theory: a) individual actors and agency; b) intended and unintended consequences of action; c)

social system; d) structure; e) social practices, and, f) social integration. This sub-section explains these six concepts<sup>34</sup> according to structuration theory, focusing on their usefulness to understand urban social group segregation in relation to the multiplication of gated communities.

a) Starting with the analysis of individual actors<sup>35</sup>, it is worth noting that according to structuration theory actors occupy a relevant role in everyday life, having the capacity to influence society and change situations, but being also constrained by structural conditions. According to Giddens, human agents are reasoning individuals who have “the capacity to understand what they do whilst they do it” (Giddens, 1984: xxiii). Following structuration theory, “action depends upon the capability of the individual to ‘make a difference’ to a pre-existing state of affairs or course of events” and, consequently, “an agent ceases to be such if he or she loses the capability to ‘make a difference’, that is, to exercise some sort of power” (Ibid.: 14). In this sense, agency refers “not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place (which is why agency implies power...)” (Ibid.: 9). This conceptualisation of individual action implies that agents are aware of the meaning of their actions and know they can change situations and events through them. However, this theory recognises that actors might also be unconscious about some events or that their actions might have unintended consequences, as explained later in this sub-section. Agency refers to this capacity to change everyday life evidencing the power agents can exercise. However, structuration theory does not consider actors as totally free agents, but constrained by social systems.

Following structuration theory, there are three processes involved in human action: 1) reflexive monitoring of action, which occurs at three levels of consciousness: the unconscious, practical consciousness, and reflexive or discursive consciousness; 2) rationalisation of action; and 3) motivation of action. (Giddens, 1984 & 1979). This

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<sup>34</sup> These six concepts are all relevant to understand the relationship between urban social group segregation and gated communities. However, the explanations of some of them like structure or individual actors require more elaboration due to the complexity of the elements involved in each conceptualisation.

<sup>35</sup> It is worth mentioning that Giddens refers to “individuals”, “agents”, “human agents”, “human individuals”, “social agents”, “actors”, “individual actors”, and “social actors” as synonyms. Therefore, the thesis also considers and uses them as synonyms.

differentiation established by Giddens explains that although actors understand their actions, they do not always make their reasons and motivations explicit. Individual action plays a key role in structuration theory. It considers that social actors reproduce every day social life through their actions, which are influenced by the social system and by other individuals. Simultaneously, these actions influence the social system and other individuals.

b) Actions produce intended and unintended consequences. The first type of consequences refers to expected outcomes according to the interests and motivations of the actors. The second type implies not expected or not pursued outcomes. Giddens's concept of unintended consequences has been examined by other scholars. Ira Cohen explains that there are "two categories of unintended consequences: 1) where agents do not know of certain outcomes generated through their practices; 2) where agents know of these outcomes, but do not actively pursue their production based upon their motives or wants" (Cohen, 1990: 45). Unintended consequences can develop into unacknowledged conditions of actions.

c) Actions are influenced by the social system, which is defined as "reproduced relations between actors or collectivities, organized as regular social practices" (Giddens, 1984: 25). The social system is made up of institutions which are considered as "practices which are deeply sedimented in time-space: that is, which are enduring and inclusive 'laterally' in the sense that they are widespread amongst the members of a community or society" (Giddens, 1979: 80). Since social institutions define the social system, then they influence and are influenced by individual action and are responsible for the structural causes influencing social life. Some of these have been explained when analysing structural causes for the development of gated communities in Chapter 2. The definition of social system provided by Giddens is closer to the most commonly used definition of structure in social sciences. This has been argued by scholars like Christopher Bryant and David Jary (1997) and Julius Mendoza (1997). This thesis sustains that although Giddens considers structure and social system as two different entities, the structure is close in meaning to the social system and, therefore, it might be included within the social system for the purposes of the thesis.

d) According to structuration theory, structure represents the medium whereby the social system affects individual action as well as the medium whereby individual action affects the social system. These individual-system interactions affect the structural rules governing future social interactions. Giddens defines structure as “rules and resources, recursively implicated in the reproduction of social systems” (Giddens, 1979: 64). Structure not only constrains, but also enables the agents to act as in pursuing an action individuals draw upon rules and resources. Rules can be considered “as techniques or generalizable procedures applied in the enactment/reproduction of social practices” (Giddens, 1984: 21). They have two aspects: normative elements that distinguish right and wrong and what actors are allowed to do and codes of significance that give meaning to things. Resources, which refer to the modes whereby transformative relations are actually incorporated into the production and reproduction of social practices, are also of two kinds: authoritative resources, which refer to types of transformative capacity -generating command over persons or actors, and allocative resources, which stem from control over material products. Rules and resources are recursively involved in institutions (Giddens, 1979 & 1984).

The structure is involved in every moment of action constraining and enabling it. This is called “duality of structure” and refers to “the essential recursiveness of social life, as constituted in social practices: structure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices” (Giddens, 1979: 5). Structuration refers to the constitution of social structures as they are reproduced and transformed by the social actions as well as the influence of the social system (Giddens, 1984). As previously mentioned, the concepts of social system and structure are two different concepts in structuration theory, but they are closely related as the structure is the medium used by social institutions to influence individual action.

e) Previous sections have showed that social practices is a key concept to understanding the process of urban social group segregation carried out by gated communities’ residents. Giddens introduces the concept of social practices to show how the relation between human action and the social system is established. “The basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of

societal totality, but social practices ordered across space and time” (Giddens, 1984: 2). Thus, social practices are at the core of this theory and refer to the “duality of structure” in a wide sense. According to Lars Kaspersen, “the entire project in *The Constitution of Society* consists of defining social practice. The concept is defined in a long theoretical movement in which the concepts of agent, power, action, structure, system, and time-space are redefined so that they come to constitute practice”<sup>36</sup> (Kaspersen, 2000: 33). In a narrow sense, social practices are “regularised types of acts” (Giddens, 1976: 75). Following Giddens’ ideas, Kenneth Tucker explains that social practices are “the behavioural and institutional dimensions of the practical consciousness of reflexive people, who draw on shared cultural beliefs and stocks of knowledge” (Tucker, 1998: 84). Social practices constitute human agents as actors whilst they embody and realise structures. The concept of social practice is central to this theory since it is the mediating concept between individuals and society (Kaspersen, 2000).

The reproduction of social life, through social practices, is related to three features of the former: routinisation, recursivity, and reflexivity. Routinisation refers to everyday social activity. Human social activities follow a routine. They are also recursive. According to Giddens, “the repetitiveness of activities which are undertaken in like manner day after day is the material grounding of what I call the recursive nature of social life” (Giddens, 1984: xxiii). The recursive character of social practices is related to their reflexivity: “It is the specifically reflexive form of the knowledgeability of human agents that is most deeply involved in the recursive ordering of social practices [...] ‘Reflexivity’ hence should be understood not merely as ‘self-consciousness; but as the monitored character of the ongoing flow of social life. To be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons” (Giddens, 1984: 3). These features are related to the three processes of human action mentioned above and show that social practices are repetitive implying being conscious of motives and interests behind them. In addition to these features, the capability of “acting otherwise” relating to the power exercised by all agents is a central element of all social practices (Giddens, 1990).

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<sup>36</sup> Italics in original.



Some elements from structuration theory, especially the concept of social practices, have been suggested by Schnell for the study of segregation. Schnell examines what he refers to as “socio-spatial segregation”, which could be considered as urban social group segregation since it is focused on the groups’ identities and actions to distance them from other individuals or groups. Drawing upon Giddens, Schnell indicates that: “Segregation may be defined... as a set of strategies directed toward distancing social groups from the rest of society within either closed territorial boundaries and/or sets of intra-group networks within an isolated spatial layer” (Schnell, 2002: 44). Schnell refers in his study to “segregating practices” defined “as a set of territorial strategies that social groups use in order to increase inter-group distances - dominating territorial fields, closing inter-group boundaries and channelling socio-spatial interactions into intra-group networks” (Ibid.: 46). Furthermore, he defines segregation in terms of practices carried out as territorial strategies, emphasising the idea that segregation is an urban phenomenon and that it is carried out by the practices of a social group.

f) The sixth concept from structuration theory to be reviewed is social integration. Although it is not a key concept of this theory, it is central to this thesis as, being the opposite of segregation, its definition might help to define segregation. The concept suggested by Giddens is limited. To him: “Integration may be understood as involving reciprocity of practices (of autonomy and dependence) between actors or collectivities” (Giddens, 1984: 28). Following this concept, Giddens explains that social integration refers to “reciprocity of practices between actors in circumstances of co-presence, understood as continuities in and disjunctions of encounters” (Ibid.: 376), which means face-to-face interactions. The latter element is one relevant feature of integration. However, the limit of this conceptualisation lies in its constraint to practices involving only co-presence. This thesis argues that integration would refer not only to co-presence, but also to the possibility of carrying out social interchanges even when they do not imply physical presence. Moreover, integration might also mean having similar interests, characteristics, or values amongst individuals, without face-to-face interaction being relevant.

Although Giddens does not study segregation, his conceptualisation of social integration becomes relevant to this thesis. Since social integration is understood as

reciprocity of social practices, by opposition, it could be said for the purpose of this thesis that segregation is considered as the lack of reciprocity of social practices. Thus, social practices appear as a key concept to assess urban social group segregation in gated communities.

The review of the literature has showed that social practices is a key concept to understanding the process of urban social segregation by gated communities' residents. Sub-section 3.2.1 showed that the concept of social practices has already been examined by scholars working on gated communities. The meanings given by them to the concept of social practices (or activities) could be considered as close to Giddens' concept of social practices since they are repetitive and routine actions, mostly conscious although actors do not explicitly state their motives. Social practices are a conscious product of social agents influenced by external factors and other individuals.

Structuration theory, as any other theory, is open to discussion. There is a large amount of publications on structuration theory, not only from Giddens, but also from his critics, that try to shed light on some of its obscure points. As previously explained, Giddens gives a key role to social practices since "structuration theory concentrates attention upon the *reproduction of practices*"<sup>37</sup> (Giddens, 1990: 313). Along with this key role given to social practices, Giddens' conceptualisation of how agency and structure interact trying to avoid voluntarism or determinist positions, has made many people working in the human geography and urban sociology fields, such as Thrift (1997) and Moos and Dear (1986), work with structuration theory.

Structuration theory has received several criticisms, such as giving more relevance to the agent than to the social system (Craib, 1992); putting more emphasis on the enabling rather than constraining elements (Craib, 1992); and not giving a clear definition of structure (Bryant & Jary, 1997). It has also been considered an eclectic theory (Craib, 1992), and not applicable to empirical research (Cohen, 1989 and Craib, 1992). The latter is the most important criticism. Giddens wrote an entire chapter on the links between structuration theory and empirical research in *The*

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<sup>37</sup> Italics in original.

*Constitution of Society* (Chapter 6) to counteract this criticism. In addition, there are authors who have used structuration theory for empirical research like Thrift (1997), Moos and Dear (1986) and Schnell (2002). This thesis considers that the other criticisms do not disqualify the validity of structuration theory and their discussion goes beyond the scope of the thesis.

### **3.2.3. Conclusions on the use of structuration theory**

Although structuration theory is not a theory on urban social segregation, it is helpful for explaining urban social group segregation as a social consequence of the development of gated communities since it acknowledges the existence of intended and unintended consequences of social practices. This allows considering social practices as the result of constraining forces coming from rules and resources of social institutions as well as social actors' will. This argument is explained in depth in Section 3.4 where key concepts of structuration theory reviewed in this section are applied to a theoretical framework that explains urban social group segregation as a consequence of gated communities' development. In addition, this section shows that other scholars have previously studied social practices of gated communities' residents, but with no clear theoretical framework. Having reviewed the theoretical approaches and identified the elements that might be useful to build a theoretical framework to explain the relationship between gated communities and urban social group segregation, next section reviews the four main concepts of that framework.

### **3.3.Social practices and viewpoints: key concepts and definitions**

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and in the previous sections of this chapter showed that a concept concerning the micro dynamics of a group that separates itself from other social groups or the society as a whole is missing. The thesis argues that a new concept needs to be developed to clarify the relationship between living in gated communities and segregation. The concept proposed in this thesis is urban social group segregation and allows an understanding of the social groups' dynamics and the interests and motivations of the individuals that form these groups. This concept is elaborated in this section and included later in a theoretical framework, the latter being influenced by the structuration theory (mainly Giddens, 1984 & 1979). The aim of this section is to provide the definition of the four central concepts as they are

understood in this thesis: gated communities, social practices and viewpoints, and urban social group segregation. Gated communities' residents appear as the units of analysis and their social practices and viewpoints are the instruments of the research on segregation. The analysis starts with the examination of the concept of gated communities.

### **3.3.1. Concept of gated communities**

There is a variety of cases that can be considered as gated communities: from a street closed by a barrier and a retrofitted security neighbourhood<sup>38</sup> to new large residential settlements surrounded by walls with high technology security devices and amenities. This variety makes the definition of the object of study essential to advance in its understanding.

This thesis defines gated communities as closed urban residential settlements voluntarily occupied by a homogeneous social group, where public space has been privatised by restricting access through the implementation of security devices. Gated communities are conceived as closed settlements from their inception and are designed with the intention of providing security to their residents and prevent penetration by non-residents; their houses are of high quality and have services and amenities that can be used only by their residents, who pay regular compulsory maintenance fees. They have a private governing body that enforces internal rules concerning behaviour and construction.

To broaden the above definition, some elements need to be further explained. Most gated communities possess a range of security devices that includes walls, fences, barriers, security guards, alarms and closed circuit television to protect properties and their residents. They have a closed perimeter from the time the building starts. This means that retrofitted security schemes to existing properties are not considered as gated communities because they have not been built as closed settlements. Houses within gated communities are usually large, built with high quality materials and are individually designed. They also have top quality infrastructure and amenities, which are highly valued services, to be used only by their residents.

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<sup>38</sup> Retrofitted security neighbourhood refers to a neighbourhood that has been provided with security devices after its construction.

These closed residential schemes restrict access to those who do not live inside. Furthermore, gated communities privatise space such as streets or squares, which, without the enclosing walls, would be public and also used by other outside residents living in spatial proximity outside the gated communities. The existence of inside amenities and services, such as sport facilities and convenience stores, also evidences the process of privatisation stimulated by this type of neighbourhood. Gated communities have an internal code of conduct that rules behaviour and housing construction and is enforced by the residents' association<sup>39</sup> that acts as a private government. There are also high maintenance fees that residents<sup>40</sup> pay monthly for the services provided, such as security and the use of amenities.

According to this concept, gated communities' residents constitute a social homogeneous group through their interests, values and socio-economic conditions, when analysed in relation to the society as a whole. Top quality houses and services as well as high maintenance fees indicate that they possess high incomes. Residents have voluntarily decided to move to this type of settlement. This voluntary character implies that residents make a conscious decision when they move to these residential schemes, which indicates that they prefer and mostly agree on the way of life within gated communities' premises. They are not forced to live there, which makes this situation different from other experiences of citizens who owing to their religion, ethnic or socio-economic level are forced to live together in ghettos or informal settlements.

In countries of the South, given their extensive use of land, gated communities are usually located in peripheral areas where land is available at affordable prices. This fact leads them to be physically close to low-income groups, who also live at the urban periphery, making social differences between inside and outside the gated communities more evident.

All these features are interrelated. The restricted access and privatisation of space require security devices to be emplaced. These, together with the amenities within the gated communities' premises, involve regular high payments by the residents.

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<sup>39</sup> The thesis refers to residents' associations as it is a wider concept including homeowners and tenants. Nevertheless, in some cases these are only homeowners' associations because tenants cannot participate.

<sup>40</sup> Hereafter, when used alone, 'residents' refers to the gated community's residents.

The use of services provided inside is regulated through a code of conduct stating what is allowed and prohibited as well as the sanctions for transgressions. This code requires an institution to control it and consequently a private governing body is set up. It is usually composed of a board of residents, with different roles and responsibilities. The social homogeneity of the residents is secured by the need for them to have enough financial resources to afford top quality and individually designed houses and the extra payment for the monthly fees. They might share social values, such as privatisation and exclusivity. Some of these might be expressed in the code of conduct. This proposed universal definition of gated community will make possible the comparison of cases worldwide.

### **3.3.2. Concepts of social practices and viewpoints**

The concept of social practices is usually taken for granted, without discussion of its meaning or a definition. Previous sections of this chapter reviewed authors who have considered social practices when analysing segregation and other scholars who have studied the practices of gated communities' residents. It also showed that some scholars have considered a 'subjective dimension' when analysing urban social segregation by taking into account the opinions, attitudes and perceptions of the social actors. This sub-section provides a concept of social practices, drawing upon some structuration theory's ideas as this theory places social practices in a central position and gives relevance to both individual and structural conditions influencing everyday life. This sub-section also defines in greater detail the concept of viewpoints, which affect social practices; these two elements work as instruments to analyse urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents.

The thesis considers as social practices those "oriented to the behavior of others" (Weber, 1978: 22), as mentioned in Section 3.2. They are regular, conscious, recognised and collective actions carried out by individuals according to their needs and interests. Social practices are not all actions, but those that follow repetitive patterns as part of the social actors' routine. They are conscious as the actors know what they are doing and why they are doing it. They are also recognised actions because individuals can identify and explain them. They are performed by individuals, but refer to a collective process since different actors do similar actions. Social practices are influenced by both individual and structural conditions. But they

can also modify the courses of actions as well as the structural conditions of the social system.

Understanding social practices requires understanding the social actors who perform them. A social actor is an individual or a group who has power to decide over her/his/its practices and to make choices in her/his/its everyday life. Power is based on the authority and command actors have over other individuals as well as over rules and material resources. Simultaneously, social actors are influenced by the social system, structural factors (like rules and resources) and the actions performed by other individuals as well as their viewpoints, which means that their actions might be limited.

This thesis proposes that social actors have viewpoints, which are the expression of their values, feelings, attitudes and knowledge. Values mean ideas held by social actors about what is good and desirable or bad and unwanted, like social homogeneity that might be considered as something positive by gated communities' residents. Feelings refer to what actors get through their senses, including perceptions, such as protection. Residents might feel protected from burglaries because they can see the security devices emplaced in the gated community's premises. Attitudes mean orientations or dispositions towards things, events or other social actors, held by individuals as a result of their values and experiences. Gated communities' residents might have, for instance, positive attitudes towards the security guards working in gated communities because they know they are providing them protection. Finally, knowledge means ideas, information, understanding, skills and experiences developed by social actors throughout their lives, such as information about rules that must be observed or personal experiences of particular situations. These elements are all interrelated and are expressed through the social actors' viewpoints.

The actors may be conscious of their practices and able to justify them, but these practices have not only intended, but may also have unintended consequences. Intended consequences are those planned and expected to happen as a result of particular social practices. Conversely, unintended consequences are not sought or known outcomes of social practices. Actors did not plan them or do not know what

their actions have brought about. The thesis argues that viewpoints explain how a social practice is carried out, as well as indicate whether its consequences are intended or unintended.

The concept of social practices is broad and refers to different realms, economic, political, cultural and religious. This thesis focuses on “neighbouring social practices” of the social actors who live in the same local territory where there might be gated communities or not. They are defined as regular, conscious, recognised and collective actions carried out by all different social groups living in spatial proximity according to their interests and needs. These social actors (individuals or groups) are expected to interact amongst themselves as part of urban life dynamics. They might also use common services and infrastructure located in their local area.

It is argued that "neighbouring social practices" are expected to lead to social interactions between social actors. However, they might sometimes lead to no social interactions. In the case of gated communities, there is non-segregation when social practices of inside residents involve social interactions with “outsiders”. On the contrary, there is urban social group segregation when these practices do not lead “insiders” to interact with “outsiders”, although this is expected due to their spatial proximity.

Some viewpoints, considered here as particular viewpoints, explain how social practices are carried out and thereupon justify their outcomes as being either social interaction or urban social group segregation. A second group of viewpoints (general viewpoints) refers to what individuals of a social group think, believe, perceive, feel and know about other individuals or social groups. According to both particular and general viewpoints, the consequences of social practices could be intended or unintended, as mentioned previously. Both types of viewpoints are equally important to establish the intention or no-intention of these consequences. Within the existing different viewpoints, it is possible to find actors with contradictory viewpoints about an issue, partly negative and partly positive. There are also ambiguous situations that are difficult to classify and positions that could be considered as neutral because they are indifferent. Although the thesis recognises that most viewpoints and everyday life situations cannot be simply classified according to a dycotomoy of positive and



negative values, it is necessary that the theoretical framework considers all these viewpoints as falling into two wide categories of positive and negative to facilitate the analysis. Viewpoints are positive when they refer to supportive expressions showing that it could be possible to build social relations between “insiders” and “outsiders”. Negative viewpoints refer to bad and underestimating opinions towards the other social group.

When social interaction is the outcome of "neighbouring social practices", positive viewpoints of gated communities' residents towards the outside local communities mean intended non-segregation. Negative viewpoints suppose that although there are social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders", the former are not interested in them and therefore there is unintended non-segregation. Conversely, when there is no social interaction and consequently urban social group segregation, positive viewpoints mean unintended urban social group segregation since this separation is not pursued by “insiders”. Negative viewpoints towards the other social group lead to intended urban social group segregation when there are no social interactions.

“Neighbouring social practices” carried out by gated communities' residents, who constitute the social group that segregates itself, are the focus of this thesis. Nevertheless, since they might segregate themselves from other social groups living in spatial proximity, it is also important to consider the social practices of the groups located outside the gated communities to analyse the possibilities of social interactions between them. This thesis considers a set of practices to examine segregation along with the explanatory general and particular viewpoints. It is therefore relevant to define the concept of urban social group segregation to understand the peculiarities of micro-scale segregation.

### **3.3.3. Concept of urban social group segregation**

The thesis argues that it is essential to distinguish between urban social segregation and urban social group segregation to understand the relationship between living in gated communities and segregation. This distinction enables the scrutinisation of the particular actions and motivations of a social group that leads it to separate itself from other social groups, and the identification of this segregation process. These micro elements are difficult to ascertain in relation to urban social segregation which

concerns the dynamics and patterns of several social groups at the city level. Urban social segregation is a complex process that refers to separation in the city mainly as a result of structural forces such as economic or cultural differences. The city represents the object of study where these structural processes take place. Along with this process of social segregation at the city level, there is also a process of urban social group segregation where the analysis focuses on a micro-level, looking at actions and motivations of a particular social group and how it relates to other social groups living in spatial proximity. When gated communities are the object of study, urban social group segregation implies the separation of their residents from the social groups living in spatial proximity, expressed through the absence of social interactions between them. Both individual and structural elements influence processes of segregation, as identified in Section 3.1.

Urban social group segregation considered as the lack of social interactions is discussed in relation to the ideas of structuration theory. As explained in Sub-section 3.2.2, the latter defines social integration as involving reciprocity of practices between individuals or groups. Therefore, by opposition, segregation is understood in this thesis as the lack of reciprocity of practices, which means the lack of social interactions between actors or groups living in spatial proximity. Other types of segregation that are not related to the absence of social interactions are not examined in this thesis. A segregated group is a social group that does not interact with other social groups living in spatial proximity and is not dependent on them.

Although the concept of urban social group segregation is based on the ideas discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, it has been further elaborated for this thesis. It is defined here as having four components: the social group that is the object of analysis; other social groups (one or more) living in spatial proximity; spatial proximity; and lack of social interactions. The centre of analysis is the social group that segregates itself from other social groups as a consequence of its motivations and actions. The social groups from which the first social group segregates itself are the second component. Since this type of segregation is defined in relation to social interaction, the social practices and viewpoints of not only the main group, in this case the gated communities' residents, but also of the members of the other social groups living in spatial proximity are both considered. However, the

attention is mainly on the first group and its social practices and viewpoints. Following the concept of gated communities in the countries of the South, given in Sub-section 3.3.1, the social groups living outside gated communities have usually a lower position in the social structure than gated communities' residents and their interests, values, opinions and resources might differ from those of "insiders".

The third component is spatial proximity of the two (or more) social groups. Spatial proximity is understood as being near in the territory in which "neighbouring social practices" are carried out and is required for potential social interactions or segregation. Urban dynamics expect members of social groups living close to each other to have some kind of relationship. Spatial proximity is also essential when examining separation, since closeness makes separateness prominent. The fourth and last component is the social interaction between different social groups in a context of spatial proximity. Social interaction is defined as direct interchanges of communication, experiences, viewpoints and activities between individuals and groups. Although it does not necessarily imply verbal or physical contact, this could serve as a base for social interaction. The social group which is the object of analysis performs "neighbouring social practices" that lead either to social interaction (non-segregation) or to a lack of it (urban social group segregation). Both consequences of those social practices could be intended or unintended, as already explained.

The relevance of the analysis of this micro-scale process lies in the potential threat for city life and urban dynamics caused by segregation in those situations when particular social groups separate from mainstream society or from other social groups. The understanding of segregation at the city scale also requires the analysis of social groups and how they behave and interact. The process of urban social group segregation might have negative effects, such as the encouragement of feelings of exclusion and being rootless, the reinforcement of social differences and social divisions, threat of the concept of democracy and equality, and encouragement of political disengagement of the social groups who segregate themselves. Nevertheless, as explained in Section 3.1, urban social group segregation might also encourage social homogeneity of group members, reinforcement of social bonds amongst members and protection from outside influences or threats.

#### **3.3.4. Summary of Section 3.3**

Based on the literature review, this section has elaborated the four key concepts of the thesis. Gated communities have been defined emphasising their main elements: enclosure and privatisation; security devices and social amenities; existence of a private governing body and a code of conduct as well as being occupied by a social homogeneous group that voluntarily decides to live in these residential settlements, mainly surrounded by lower income groups. Urban social group segregation is defined as the separation of a social group from other social groups living in spatial proximity as a result of the lack of social interactions analysed through the study of social practices and viewpoints. For the purpose of this research, only social practices considered as “neighbouring social practices” are examined. They refer to regular, conscious, recognised and collective actions carried out by all the different social actors living in spatial proximity according to their interests and needs and might lead to social interactions or lack of interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders”. Viewpoints refer to values, feelings, attitudes and knowledge held by these social actors. They help to explain how social practices are carried out and to examine their consequences, which can be intended or unintended. Urban social group segregation can be unintended when residents have positive viewpoints about the local communities living outside, or an intended consequence of social practices when these viewpoints are negative. The following section uses these four concepts for the elaboration of a theoretical framework.

#### **3.4. Theoretical framework**

The theoretical problem confronted by the thesis is the lack of a conceptual framework to examine and explain how a social group living in a gated community separates itself from other social groups living in spatial proximity. This supposes that living in gated communities leads to processes of urban social group segregation, but the explanation of how this happens remains unclear. Using the concepts discussed in the previous section, this section elaborates a theoretical framework to examine these processes, drawing on previously discussed concepts and ideas from the structuration theory (Giddens, 1979 & 1984), although with some alterations.

As stated earlier, the concept of urban social group segregation, when applied to gated communities’ residents, implies their separation from the other social groups

living in spatial proximity through their social practices and viewpoints. Segregation has been defined in Sub-section 3.3.3 as the lack of social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders” due to the absence of common or shared social practices. Following structuration theory, the thesis considers that social actors express themselves through their social practices. Although this theory does not refer explicitly to viewpoints, this element has been included in this theoretical framework since the reviewed literature emphasised the relevance of considering a subjective dimension of segregation (Sabatini *et al.*, 2001). Social practices and viewpoints are used as instruments to analyse urban social group segregation by gated communities’ residents, as explained in the previous section. The focus is on "neighbouring social practices" which are those regular actions carried out by all the different social groups living in spatial proximity according to their interests and needs. They are expected to lead to social interactions between these social groups living in spatial proximity. However, the thesis argues that when examining gated communities, these practices might also lead to urban social group segregation by their residents.

Social actors have the ability to constrain their practices through their own viewpoints, but they are also influenced by structural conditions. Within the latter, it is important to consider material and financial as well as symbolic resources’ distribution and rules. Social practices depend on the dynamics between these individual and structural factors. The thesis argues that in the case of urban social group segregation, the individual elements (values, opinions, interests and knowledge held by the group) are responsible and allow an understanding of how the processes of segregation take place when living in gated communities. But structural conditions also need to be considered.

Viewpoints are influenced by both individual elements and structural conditions. For instance, within the individual elements, different values held by social actors might lead to either negative or positive viewpoints about other individuals or social groups. What social actors do, think and believe can influence other individuals and thus buying a house in a gated community to acquire a higher social status can create an imitation process. Structural conditions might also influence viewpoints. For instance, increasing crime rates might create feelings of distrust and suspicion towards other individuals or groups and consequently encourage negative

viewpoints. The distribution of resources, which imply command over things or persons, also influences viewpoints. Symbolic resources, such as power, might influence the relationships between residents and the staff working in these private settlements. The different command of material resources of gated communities' residents in relation to "outsiders" might also condition social practices. Such resources might refer not only to amenities located within the gated community, but also to material possessions of "insiders", such as properties and vehicles. An example would be the existence of amenities inside the gated community which implies that their residents do not need those located outside. It might also signify that residents do not use public transport because they have their own vehicles. Power relations and rules about what it is allowed and forbidden in the gated community also impact on social practices. One such is the prohibition of parties with loud music within the gated community's premises which would discourage the young from socialising there.

"Neighbouring social practices" lead to either social interactions (non-segregation) between social groups living in spatial proximity or urban social group segregation. Both results could be intended or unintended. Viewpoints explain social practices and whether their consequences are intended or unintended. Intended non-segregation happens when "insiders" perform similar practices, such as using public transport, or share some of their practices with "outsiders", like socialising together, and their viewpoints about the other groups and the practices are positive. Unintended non-segregation refers to similar or shared social practices, but also includes the existence of negative viewpoints about the other social group and the practices, which implies that social interactions have not been actively pursued and happen unconsciously. When segregation is the result of social practices, this could be intended urban social group segregation if viewpoints are negative and social actors have pursued segregation as an outcome of their practices or are aware of this being a result of their practices. Negative viewpoints refer to bad and inferior valuations of the other social group or of the practice and therefore there is no interest in social interactions. Unintended urban social group segregation happens when positive viewpoints exist, which are supportive expressions towards the practice and the other social group. This indicates that it may be possible to build

social relations between the two and that separation between "insiders" and "outsiders" has not been planned.

Different social groups living in a spatial proximity are expected to interact while carrying out their daily activities. "Insiders" are the focus of the analysis in this thesis and the practices of "outsiders" are only examined to see if there is interaction or segregation. If "outsiders" do not carry out similar social practices to "insiders" or shared practices with them, the possibilities of social interactions are scarce, even when both groups might have the intention to interact.

This section has elaborated a theoretical framework to define the relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation. Different social groups living in spatial proximity are expected to interact. However, as one of these groups live in a gated community, there may not be social interactions between this group and the other social groups living outside. Social practices and viewpoints, influenced by both individual and structural conditions, are considered as tools to analyse urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents.

### **3.5. Conclusions**

The aim of this chapter was to review conceptual approaches to segregation to identify a suitable one for the analysis of segregation in relation to the development of gated communities. However, as the concept of urban social group segregation has not been defined by the literature analysed in this chapter, the literature on urban social segregation was examined to identify elements that might help to define it. For this, two questions were posed: a) How is urban social segregation explained? And b) How can the concept of urban social segregation help to understand and define the concept of urban social group segregation?

Three theoretical approaches were reviewed in this chapter. The first one from the spatial sociology school provided some interesting ideas and a conceptualisation of segregation. However, it failed to provide explanations of how the process of segregation takes place and which the factors involved are. The main contribution of this approach to this thesis consisted in the identification of three dimensions of urban social segregation: physical proximity, interaction and a subjective dimension.

These should be considered in a theoretical proposition explaining urban social group segregation.

The Marxist school was the second theoretical approach reviewed. It gave valuable insights for this thesis. It emphasised that segregation and integration are features of the city and that segregation is a result of class differences in the capitalist society. This school also explained how the process of segregation takes place and the importance of the concept of social practices for its understanding. Similar to spatial sociology, it recognised proximity and interaction as dimensions of segregation. The main drawback of this approach was the overstating of structural factors over individual action in producing segregation and not considering segregation at a micro-level.

Both schools of thought recognised structural and subjective causes of segregation. Nevertheless, they did not receive equal importance. This led to a search for a theoretical approach that would emphasise both types of causes and allow segregation at the group level to be considered by taking into account all different elements involved in the process of segregation from the social actors' perspective and especially focusing on the analysis of social practices.

Key concepts of structuration theory, in addition to the relevant ideas highlighted from the spatial sociology approach and the Marxist school, could be used to build a theoretical framework that allows an explanation for the phenomenon of urban social group segregation in relation to gated communities and providing an instrument for its understanding. In this sense, the two questions posed at the beginning of this chapter were partly answered. Not all elements involved in the process of segregation were identified by the spatial sociology and Marxist schools since they mainly consider segregation as a macro-level process. In contrast, structuration theory could be applied to segregation with consideration given to not only the subjective, but also the structural elements involved in this process. Thus, the elements provided by these three schools that could be used to build a theoretical framework are: social practices, proximity, interaction, subjective elements (or subjective dimension as called by some scholars) and structural elements.



The difficulties of using any of these theories made it necessary for other approaches to be explored to provide satisfactory answers to the questions posed for this chapter. For this reason, structuration theory was examined since it gives a central role to the concept of social practices and keeps a balance between structural and subjective drivers involved in social life. Some concepts of structuration theory were considered useful to build the concept of urban social group segregation.

Based on the elements identified in the literature review, this chapter elaborated the main four concepts of the thesis: gated communities, social practices, viewpoints, and urban social group segregation. It also explained that the focus of the analysis is on “neighbouring social practices” and elaborated on its meaning. The chapter also developed a theoretical framework that explains how the relationship between gated communities and segregation takes place. The theoretical framework suggested in this section requires the elaboration of how it could be applied to a research for the purpose of shedding light on the relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation. The next chapter proposes a methodological framework for this thesis.

## **CHAPTER 4:**

### **METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **Introduction**

Based on the theoretical framework elaborated in the previous chapter, this chapter develops a methodological framework for the thesis. Since the research questions posed in Chapter 1 try to address “how” gated communities residents perform particular “neighbouring social practices” that might lead them to a process of urban social group segregation, a qualitative research with a case study strategy is proposed<sup>41</sup>. This type of research allows for an examination of micro-level processes (Elias & Scotson, 1994; Whyte, 1993).

The chapter is organised in three main sections. Section 4.1 develops the research questions and theoretical proposition. Section 4.2 proposes a research project comprising a set of “neighbouring social practices” and viewpoints for the application of the theoretical and methodological frameworks. Section 4.3 is an analytical reflexion on how the fieldwork for the research was conducted, considering research methods used, sampling techniques, interviewees and access to them. It also explains the criteria for the case study selection and the method for data analysis used. By means of a research project in an intermediate city of Argentina, the thesis intends to be a contribution to this field in the countries of the South.

#### **4.1. Research questions and theoretical proposition**

Following the theoretical framework elaborated in Chapter 3, social practices and viewpoints are used as instruments to explain the relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation. A number of “neighbouring social practices” were selected for this research and are developed in Section 4.2, based on the author’s knowledge on the subject and a pilot project<sup>42</sup> carried out seven months before the field research, in addition to research findings from other cities by the authors reviewed in Chapter 2. The selected practices were considered as the most relevant in relation to different social groups living in spatial proximity inside and

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<sup>41</sup> See Yin (1994) for the use of the case study research method and Stroh (2000b) for the use of qualitative research and interviews in particular.

<sup>42</sup> See section 4.3.1

outside the gated communities. These were the most relevant because they are common practices that most citizens are supposed to carry out, such as attending school, shopping and spending free time with friends. There are also practices related to the features of gated communities. For instance, the existence of security devices or the availability of amenities and services within the premises might imply changes in how these practices would be carried out in a non-gated neighbourhood.

As stated in Chapter 1, the thesis poses two central questions:

- Is there a relationship between living in gated communities and urban social segregation?
- And if there is, how can this be explained?

The review of the literature concluded that there seems to be a relation between these two concepts and the most common theoretical assumption is that gated communities encourage segregation. The thesis questions this assumption and argues that this relationship has not yet been defined precisely and that how gated communities encourage segregation remains unclear.

Bearing in mind this theoretical void, and in order to explain how the process of urban social group segregation happens, the conceptual framework elaborated for this thesis in Chapter 3 proposed that social practices and viewpoints could serve as tools to explain the relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents. Segregation is defined as the lack of interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" living in spatial proximity. Social actors living in spatial proximity carry out "neighbouring social practices", considered as regular actions performed in spatial proximity according to the social actors' needs and interests. Consequently, in the context of gated communities, the thesis asks: How are "neighbouring social practices" performed by these residents? Although these practices are expected to encourage social interactions between different social groups because of living in spatial proximity, some of these might lead to the segregation of "insiders". Then, in which situations do some of these practices lead to urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents? The theoretical framework proposed that viewpoints have an important role in explaining the process of segregation by these residents. Then,

how do “insiders” and “outsiders” viewpoints influence the consequences of “neighbouring social practices”? And finally, how can it be explained that some “neighbouring social practices” by gated communities’ residents lead to urban social group segregation, when they are supposed to facilitate social interactions?

To summarise, the thesis poses the following research questions:

- Is urban social group segregation pursued by gated communities’ residents? And if so, how does this happen?
- How are "neighbouring social practices" performed by gated communities’ residents?
- In which situations do some "neighbouring social practices" lead to urban social group segregation by gated communities’ residents?
- How do “insiders” and “outsiders” viewpoints influence the consequences of “neighbouring social practices”?
- How can it be explained that some “neighbouring social practices” by gated communities’ residents lead to urban social group segregation, when they are supposed to facilitate social interactions?

As already acknowledged, the thesis assumes that when different social groups live in spatial proximity, their “neighbouring social practices” encourage social interaction. However, in the case of gated communities, it could also be that some of these practices lead to urban social group segregation by their residents. Social interactions between actors from different social groups living close to each other may be difficult with those living in gated communities due to the latter’s attributes. Viewpoints help to explain how “neighbouring social practices” are performed and to determine whether the consequences of these practices are intended or unintended. Gated communities’ residents might segregate themselves from the residents living outside in spatial proximity through the way they carry out “neighbouring social practices” and their particular and general viewpoints. Particular viewpoints refer to how these practices are performed and justified, while general viewpoints are related to how one social group perceives the other social groups living in spatial proximity. In this case, the process of urban social group segregation might be mostly intended since it is pursued or known by the gated communities’ residents. The latter

constitute the main group of study for the thesis as the one that segregates itself from the surrounding local communities.

The methodological framework is organised following a theoretical proposition that is based on the findings from the literature review and the theoretical framework elaborated for this thesis. It also considers the type of data gathered during the fieldwork. The research aimed at finding evidence to support or contradict the main theoretical proposition of this thesis:

**“Neighbouring social practices” by gated communities’ residents lead to intended urban social group segregation by this social group, which is explained by their viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community.**

The research findings are expected to enable the identification of each of the selected “neighbouring social practices” as either leading to urban social group segregation by gated communities’ residents, or resulting in social interactions (and therefore non-segregation) between “insiders” and “outsiders”.

This section has examined the questions and theoretical proposition guiding this research. Based on this, the next section elaborates on the research project.

#### **4.2. Research project**

This section gives details of the set of social practices and viewpoints that comprise the research project. It develops ten “ideal types” of “neighbouring social practices” carried out by gated communities’ residents and their related viewpoints. Although the focus of the research is on these residents, these practices are expected to be performed by all the different social groups living in spatial proximity according to their needs and interests. Therefore, these social practices might lead to social interactions amongst “insiders” and “outsiders”. The practices carried out by members of the outside local communities are also considered, but they are placed at a second level of importance as they are not relevant in themselves; they help to determine if similar or shared practices between “insiders” and “outsiders” exist, or if there is urban social group segregation.

Following Weber, ideal types are theoretical forms of action constructed by the research to examine real facts. To Weber, ideal types “are always constructed with a view to adequacy on the level of meaning” (Weber, 1978: 20). They help to formulate terminology, classifications and theoretical propositions. Since ideal types are theoretical constructions, real phenomena do not exactly correspond to them. It could be that reality is more complex than ideal types, leading to modifications to their names, descriptions and outcomes.

“Neighbouring social practices”, as previously explained in Chapter 3, refer to regular actions performed by all social actors living in spatial proximity according to their needs and interests. They are expected to produce social interactions between members of the different social groups who live near each other. However, these practices do not always result in social interactions, but lead to urban social group segregation. The purpose of the research was to examine how these results might happen. It could also be the case that social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders” do not take place, but they are prompted by the practice, which means that they are potentially possible. This situation implies that the practice has to be considered as a contribution to non-segregation.

All these ideal types of “neighbouring social practices” are influenced by both structural factors and individual elements. Structural factors refer to those not related to the individuals, such as cultural or economic factors, and also to the attributes of the gated community. Viewpoints are the individual elements that influence practices. In all these practices, two groups of viewpoints are considered. First, the viewpoints about the practice, which refer to how the practice is justified by those who perform it (particular viewpoints). Secondly, the viewpoints of one group about the other, mainly of “insiders” about “outsiders” (general viewpoints). Both viewpoints condition whether segregation and non-segregation are intended or unintended consequences of these “neighbouring social practices”. For an analytical purpose, viewpoints are considered as positive or negative. They are positive when there is knowledge of the other group, favourable opinions and no prejudices. This could promote closer relationships with the other social group. Conversely, viewpoints are negative when there are prejudices, no knowledge about the other

group and opinions are not favourable, leading to no interests in developing social interactions with the other social group.

Ten social practices were proposed as “ideal types” for this research. They were selected on the basis of knowledge of the situation of gated communities in Mendoza and Argentina as a whole as well as on the findings from a pilot project (explained in the next section) and the reviewed literature. There is no established hierarchy of these practices. The analysis of the data will show if residents give more importance to some practices than others. These “neighbouring social practices” are divided into two groups. Group A refers to practices that have been originated by the existence of the gated community itself. This means that its attributes, such as closed perimeter, security devices, residents’ association and code of conduct, amongst others, as explained in Section 3.3.1, might encourage particular social practices between its residents and the outside surrounding communities. These are: 1) use of public space; 2) institutional communication between inside and outside communities; 3) charity work benefiting the outside poor communities; 4) job provision for outside communities. Group B includes social practices related to urban life in general and carried out by most citizens, who as a result of developing these practices might interact with members of other social groups living in spatial proximity. This group includes the following practices: 5) social relations and venues for socialisation; 6) shopping; 7) schooling; 8) religious practices; 9) sports; and 10) use of public transport.

#### **4.2.1. Practice 1: Use of the public space**

When different social groups live in spatial proximity, it is expected that their members would be able to use freely the public space defined by their territories. Public space refers here mainly to the space occupied by streets, squares and communal gardens. However, the presence of a gated community could mean the physical isolation of its territory. The attributes of the gated community might suppose that the public space changes or disappears, been appropriated by the gated community itself, or that it remains as public space although within the settlement.

This practice refers to the use of the public space located within the gated community. It is expected that the use of the streets, squares and gardens of the gated

community by both “insiders” and “outsiders” would imply social interactions between them. Considering the security devices that characterise gated communities, it might be possible that although there are gates to enter the gated community, access is unrestrictive. This means that everybody can enter and use the public space inside and interact with other social actors living inside or outside the gated community who also use this public space. However, it might be that this practice does not encourage social interaction due to the attributes of the gated community, especially the existence of restricted access. It might not be possible to perform this practice as non-residents may not be able to enter the gated community freely and then the public space has a restricted use and is for those inside only. It might also be the case that the public space has been privatised and there is no public space inside. In this situation, it has to be argued whether the privatisation of the space constitutes a process of segregation in itself.

Once it is established whether or not “insiders” use the public space within the gated community, its use by “outsiders” has to be considered. There is urban social group segregation if both groups do not use the public space inside the gated community. Table 4.1 shows four possible outcomes for this practice. One outcome is intended non-segregation when both “insiders” and “outsiders” use the public space located within the gated community and viewpoints of “insiders” towards “outsiders” are positive (Cell A). Since the viewpoints are positive, social interactions with “outsiders” are pursued. There is unintended non-segregation when there is social interaction due to shared social practices, but the viewpoints of the gated community’s residents towards those living outside are negative (Cell C). This means that social interactions are not pursued. There is urban social group segregation when only one group uses the public space located inside the gated community, preventing it from interacting with the other social group. This segregation is unintended when viewpoints are positive (Cell B), as viewpoints do not represent an obstacle for potential interactions and the separation might not have been desired. There is intended segregation when viewpoints are negative (Cell D) since this would mean that segregation is planned as a result of negative opinions, feelings, perceptions and no knowledge about “outsiders”.



The use of public space might differ according to the age and gender of the social actors. Therefore, this table needs to be considered for the analysis of this practice by children, teenagers and young adults, female adults and male adults.

**Table 4.1: Use of public space**

Viewpoints	Social practice Use of public space	
	Used by both groups	Used by only one group
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

#### **4.2.2. Practice 2: Institutional communication between inside and outside communities**

Institutional communication is the second practice proposed that is related to the existence and attributes of the gated community. The objects of study are not inside and outside residents, but the communities living in different neighbourhoods as social actors. Living in spatial proximity supposes that there might be common interests between different neighbourhoods or even some conflicts between them. This practice is related to the way communications between different neighbourhoods are carried out to discuss common interests or conflicts. It implies analysing the role residents' associations play.

The first step for the examination of this practice is to identify whether there are common interests or conflicts demanding communication between “insiders” and “outsiders”. Having identified these common issues, it is relevant to consider how they are treated, their importance, the actors involved and solutions sought. The second step is identifying whether there is communication or not between the gated communities' association and one or more of the residents' associations of the outside neighbourhoods. Communication could be formal or informal. Formal institutional communication refers to letters addressed to the other neighbourhood and meetings held, whilst informal institutional communication is restricted to informal visits or phone calls to discuss common issues or problems.

The existence of institutional communication means the possibility of social interactions to deal with common interests or conflict resolution in a collective way and, hence, the existence of non-segregation between the two social groups, as Table 4.2 shows. There are four possible outcomes for this practice. There is intended non-segregation when there is institutional communication between "insiders" and "outsiders" and viewpoints are positive (Cell A) implying that social interactions are pursued. There is unintended non-segregation when there is institutional communication but the viewpoints are negative (Cell C) and social actors are not interested in fostering social interactions with the other groups. The absence of institutional communication would mean no social interaction and, consequently, the existence of urban social group segregation. Again here, viewpoints would determine whether this segregation is unintended or intended. The first situation (Cell B) refers to cases where despite the absence of institutional communication between the two social groups, positive viewpoints exist and segregation is not pursued. There is intended segregation (Cell D) when viewpoints are negative, which contributes to the lack of communication between the social groups.

**Table 4.2: Institutional communication between inside and outside communities**

Viewpoints	Social practice Institutional communication	
	Institutional communication between inside and outside communities	No institutional communication between inside and outside communities
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

The absence of institutional communication would mean that there is no contact between the two social groups or that there is a third party involved that plays a mediating role. In this case, it is relevant to consider who the mediator is and why s/he/it has to play this role. This practice would consider a possible extreme situation of segregation as a consequence of not only lack of interaction, but also lack of conflict between two neighbourhoods.

#### 4.2.3. Practice 3: Charity work benefiting the outside poor communities

Charity work refers to a practice performed by residents to help poor families who live in the surrounding area. The existence of a charity practice would mean the existence of solidarity bonds between the two social groups. The particular viewpoints of gated communities' residents about this practice would indicate whether charity is done as a moral obligation or as a way of protecting the gated community population from potential riots coming from the outside poor local community. General viewpoints about the other social group also influence the outcome of this practice. The charity work is conditioned by structural factors, which refer to the population's socio-economic situation, social polarisation and financial resources held by residents, and also by individual elements related to the opinions held by social actors.

As Table 4.3 indicates, the existence of a charity practice performed by residents, who have a positive opinion about the outside poor communities would mean that social interactions between these two groups are prompted and therefore there is intended non-segregation (Cell A). However, when the charity practice is conducted but there are negative opinions about the outside social group, this social interaction is not intended and the result is unintended non-segregation (Cell C). There is no social interaction (segregation) when there is no charity work. In the case of residents having positive viewpoints about the outside poor communities, this segregation is unintended (Cell B) since it is not pursued. The last situation happens when there is no charity work and the viewpoints about the other social group are negative, which might justify the inexistence of social interactions between the two groups and the existence of intended urban social group segregation (Cell D).

**Table 4.3: Charity work benefiting the outside poor communities**

Viewpoints	Social practice Charity work	
	Charity to the outside surrounding poor community	No charity to the outside surrounding poor community
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

#### 4.2.4. Practice 4: Job provision for outside local communities

This practice examines whether “insiders” hire “outsiders” to work in the gated community and it is a practice created as a consequence of the existence of the gated community. It is based on the argument that in countries where domestic labour is cheap, gated communities are considered as job engines for the surrounding local communities, especially for the provision of low-skilled jobs. Working opportunities inside gated communities would mean the possibility of social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders”, regardless of these interactions being hierarchical and of an unbalanced power relation since “insiders” are the employers and “outsiders” the employees.

The existence of members of the outside surrounding communities working in the gated community would mean social interactions between the two social groups and therefore non-segregation. There is intended non-segregation when there are positive viewpoints about the other social group (Cell A), meaning that social interaction is conscious, as Table 4.4 indicates. There is unintended non-segregation when these viewpoints are negative and social interaction is not pursued (Cell C). If there are no “outsiders” working inside, this would mean a process of segregation since social interaction is not possible. Urban social group segregation would be unintended (Cell B) when despite the non-existence of working links, “insiders” have positive viewpoints towards “outsiders”, meaning that the separation is not desired. Intended segregation (Cell D) would happen when viewpoints about the other social group are negative, and this might be one of the reasons for not hiring local residents to work within the gated community.

**Table 4.4: Job provision for outside local communities**

Viewpoints	Social practice Job provision	
	Work inside the gated community	No work inside the gated community
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

Job provision is the last practice from Group A, comprising those related to the attributes of the gated community. The next ideal types elaborated in this sub-section belong to Group B, which are those practices referring to urban life activities.

#### **4.2.5. Practice 5: Social relations and venues for socialisation**

Socialisation is defined in this thesis as the activities performed by social actors when spending their free time and when meeting other individuals or groups. The practice considers the venues for socialisation for the gated community's residents and where their partners for socialisation live. It is expected that social groups living in spatial proximity would potentially interact when socialising. Thus, there are social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" when they socialise together and use similar venues for socialisation. In contrast, there is urban social group segregation if "insiders" do not socialise with "outsiders", nor do they share the same venues for socialisation. This practice, similar to others, acknowledges that "insiders" might also use facilities in other city areas, different from the local surrounding communities. Nevertheless, this is beyond the analysis for this thesis, which concentrates on the relationships between citizens living in spatial proximity and therefore the practices carried out in that space.

The practice considers two different venues for socialisation: a) the gated community, which is subdivided into common places (social and sport amenities) and private places (houses); and, b) the surrounding local communities. The analysis is focused on whether residents develop social relations with "outsiders" when socialising in these two venues. It considers that there are social interactions with the members of the surrounding communities when they have friends who live there and they use venues located in the gated community for socialisation, regardless of their viewpoints being positive or negative. Conversely, there is segregation if there are no social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" when residents socialise.

Table 4.5 shows the different alternatives this practice can engender. The venues are the main criteria for the analysis and there are eight possible outcomes. As far as the gated community as venue for socialisation is considered, there is segregation if "insiders" only socialise with other "insiders", viewpoints being positive or negative. If viewpoints are positive, segregation is unintended (Cell A) since the lack of

interaction is not pursued. If viewpoints are negative, segregation is intended (Cell B) as there are no interests in having social relations with “outsiders” because they are considered in a negative light. In contrast, if “insiders” have “outsiders” as partners for socialisation, this contributes to intended non-segregation (Cell C) when viewpoints about the latter are positive, and unintended non-segregation (Cell D) when viewpoints are negative.

**Table 4.5: Social relations and venues for socialisation**

Social practice: Social relations and venues for socialisation			
Venues for socialisation	Partners for socialisation	Viewpoints	
		Positive	Negative
Gated community	“Insiders”	Unintended segregation (A)	Intended segregation (B)
	“Outsiders”	Intended non-segregation (C)	Unintended non-segregation (D)
Surrounding communities	“Insiders”	Intended non-segregation (E)	Unintended non-segregation (F)
	“Outsiders”	Intended non-segregation (G)	Unintended non-segregation (H)

The second venue considered consists of places located in the surrounding communities. In reference to these, if “insiders” socialise in the surrounding local communities, this implies that social interactions either take place or are prompted. The four outcomes for this venue are non-segregation processes because this means that “insiders” are not isolating from the outside local communities, since they are using their venues for socialisation, regardless of whether they socialise there with “insiders” or “outsiders” or not. There is intended non-segregation when there are positive viewpoints about “outsiders” and about the practice (Cells E and G) and unintended when viewpoints are negative (Cells F and H). Nevertheless, it is essential to consider that these results are different according to whether residents socialise only with other “insiders” (Cells E and F) or also with “outsiders” (G and H). In the latter case, there is non-segregation since “insiders” socialise with “outsiders”, regardless of the viewpoints. In the case of Cells E and F, “insiders” socialise amongst themselves but using the outside facilities, which means that they are creating the possibilities for potential interaction with “outsiders”, although this might not happen yet.

When analysing the socialisation practice, the venues for socialisation of the gated community's residents and where their partners for socialisation live are examined for several groups according to age and gender: children, teenagers and young adults, female adults and male adults. This practice might be different according to age since children and teenagers might be less autonomous in their movements and hence they might need to concentrate their social activities on limited venues or depend on adults to meet friends and family. Gender differences might suppose that women and men carry out different socialisation practices.

#### **4.2.6. Practice 6: Shopping**

Residents living in spatial proximity are expected to interact while shopping. This practice examines the venues where gated communities' residents shop. It could be that they use the retail shops located in the outside neighbourhoods and this should foster social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders". However, it could be that the gated community have shopping facilities inside and residents do not need to go outside the settlement.

As Table 4.6 shows, there are four possible outcomes for the shopping practice. There is non-segregation when gated communities' residents do their shopping in the local surrounding areas since this facilitates social interactions between the two social groups. Non-segregation is intended when residents have positive viewpoints about "outsiders" (Cell A), implying pursued social interaction. There is unintended non-segregation when these viewpoints are negative (Cell C), which could show that social interaction is not known or wanted. There is segregation when residents do their shopping within the gated communities' premises, diminishing the possibilities of social interaction with "outsiders". This segregation is unintended when viewpoints of "insiders" about "outsiders" are positive (Cell B), meaning that segregation is not aimed for. Segregation is intended when these viewpoints are negative and therefore it might have been pursued by gated communities' residents (Cell D). This practice is examined separately for women and men considering that there might be gender differences in the way it is performed.

**Table 4.6: Shopping**

Viewpoints	Social practice Shopping	
	Location of shopping facilities	
	In the surrounding communities	In the gated community
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

#### 4.2.7. Practice 7: Schooling

The seventh social practice proposed refers to where children living in gated communities attend primary schools. This is a "neighbouring social practice" because it implies that children living in spatial proximity might attend the same school, facilitating social interactions between children from different neighbourhoods including gated communities. Thus, it is important to consider the location of the schools attended by the children living in gated communities and whether these are state or private schools. Since some gated communities might have a primary school within their premises, this might imply that children who attend this school do not have possibilities to interact with outside children, considering that only "insiders" are allowed to attend that school.

Table 4.7 shows the four possible outcomes for the analysis of this practice. There is non-segregation when gated communities' children attend primary schools located in the surrounding local areas. It is intended non-segregation when the viewpoints of children or parents living in gated communities towards other children living in spatial proximity are positive (Cell A). However, when these viewpoints are negative, there is unintended non-segregation as social interaction is not pursued (Cell C). When children who live in gated communities attend schools located inside the gated communities, they cannot interact with children from the surrounding local areas, considering that only residents are allowed in the primary school inside the gated community. The same happens when gated communities' children attend schools located in other city areas, reducing the possibilities for social interaction with children living in the surrounding neighbourhoods. Then, there is segregation, when children from gated communities attend primary schools not located in the



surrounding areas. But there might be positive viewpoints about the outside children, which means that this segregation is unintended (Cell B). There is intended segregation when inside children do not attend schools in the surrounding areas and have negative viewpoints about the outside children, which means that separation from “outsiders” is sought (Cell D).

**Table 4.7: Schooling**

Viewpoints	Social practice Schooling	
	Location of schools attended	
	In the surrounding communities	In the gated community or in other city areas
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

This social practice considers only attendance at primary school and not secondary school or university because not all local communities have their own secondary schools or university institutions and therefore these cannot be considered as "neighbouring social practices".

#### **4.2.8. Practice 8: Religious practices**

Worship might contribute to social interactions between different people. This practice refers to the use of religious infrastructure by gated communities' residents. It considers that there might be religious institutions in the surroundings of gated communities. If their residents use these places, this implies social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders". However, it could be that residents do not practise worship and, therefore, there is no social interaction. It could also be that there is a small place for worship inside the gated community where its residents might go and where they do not interact with “outsiders”.

Table 4.8 indicates the four outcomes for this practice. There is non-segregation if residents worship at the religious institutions located in the surrounding areas. This non-segregation is intended when residents have positive viewpoints about “outsiders” (Cell A), meaning that they aim for social interaction. Non-segregation is unintended when they have negative viewpoints about those living in the

surroundings (Cell C) and thus social interaction is not pursued. When gated communities' residents do not practise worship or go to religious institutions located within the gated community or in other city areas, they do not have possibilities for social interaction with "outsiders". Therefore, there is urban social group segregation. It is unintended when the viewpoints of "insiders" about "outsiders" are positive (Cell B), implying that the lack of social interaction was not perceived. There is intended segregation when viewpoints are negative (Cell D) and separation might have been sought.

**Table 4.8: Religious practices**

Viewpoints	Social practice Religious practices	
	Location of religious institutions	
	In the surrounding Communities	In the gated community or in other city areas
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

#### **4.2.9. Practice 9: Sports**

Playing sports is a practice that might contribute to develop social interactions between different social groups living in spatial proximity. The analysis of this practice focuses on the venues used by gated communities' residents. It assumes that there might be sport amenities in the areas in close spatial proximity with gated communities. If their residents use these places for sports, this implies social interaction between "insiders" and "outsiders". However, it could be that residents do not practise sports and therefore there is no social interaction between these two social groups. It could also be that there are sports facilities inside the gated community and consequently its residents might use those, which are only available for the use of "insiders", and thus they do not interact with "outsiders".

There are four outcomes for this practice as Table 4.9 shows. There is non-segregation when residents use the sports facilities located in the surrounding areas. This non-segregation is intended when gated communities' residents have positive viewpoints about "outsiders" (Cell A), meaning that they might be interested in social interactions with the members of the outside communities. Non-segregation is unintended when "insiders" have negative viewpoints about those living in the

surrounding areas (Cell C) and consequently social interaction might not be pursued. When residents use only sports facilities located within the gated community, or do not practise sports, they do not have possibilities for social interactions with “outsiders”. Therefore, there is urban social group segregation. It is unintended when the viewpoints of “insiders” about “outsiders” are positive (Cell B), implying that the lack of social interaction is not pursued. There is intended segregation when viewpoints are negative (Cell D) and separation is deliberate.

**Table 4.9: Sports**

Viewpoints	Social practice Sports	
	Location of sports facilities	
	In the surrounding communities	In the gated community or in other city areas
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

This practice is analysed according to the age and gender of the residents, considering that these criteria might suppose different outcomes for the practice.

#### **4.2.10. Practice 10: Use of public transport**

Most gated communities do not allow public transport to enter their premises. However, the local areas where they are situated are usually served by public transport used by the outside residents. This practice examines whether gated communities’ residents use public transport as this would mean social interactions with “outsiders”.

Table 4.10 indicates the four outcomes for the use of public transport. The analysis considers that there is non-segregation when both groups use public transport. There is intended non-segregation when viewpoints of “insiders” about “outsiders” are positive, which contribute to social interactions (Cell A) and unintended non-segregation when these viewpoints are negative (Cell C), implying that residents do not aim for social interaction, although it happens. There is urban social group segregation when only one group uses public transport. It is unintended segregation when despite the non-sharing of the use of public transport, there are positive viewpoints from “insiders” towards “outsiders” (Cell B), indicating that the

separation is not pursued. There is intended segregation when these viewpoints are negative (Cell D), which implies that segregation is desired.

**Table 4.10: Use of public transport**

Viewpoints	Social practice Use of public transport	
	Used by both groups	Used by only one group
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

This practice is considered according to gender and age differences, since children and young residents who do not drive might have different needs for transport from adults.

#### **4.2.11. Summary of the research project**

This section has given details of the design of the research project that identifies the social practices and viewpoints examined in relation to the research questions and theoretical proposition of the thesis. Ten “neighbouring social practices” and their related viewpoints have been selected and elaborated. They are common social practices that most citizens are expected to perform like shopping and playing sports. There are also practices related to the attributes of gated communities, such as controlled access, inside amenities, and residents’ association. These practices are “ideal types” to find out whether living in gated communities leads to the segregation of their residents from the outside local communities. Urban social group segregation implies that the group of residents living inside the gated community decides to separate from the other social groups living in spatial proximity. This social group separates as a consequence of their practices and viewpoints. Practices are regular actions performed by all the different social groups who live in spatial proximity according to their needs and interests. Viewpoints are expressions of values, feelings, attitudes and knowledge held by the social actors to explain how social practices are carried out and influence the outcomes of these practices as being intended or unintended. Differences in age and gender of residents are also examined when analysing these “neighbouring social practices”.

### **4.3. Researching Palmares**

The research fieldwork for the thesis was carried out between January and April 2003 in a gated community called “Conjunto Urbano Palmares” (known as Palmares) located in the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza (MAM). This section explains how the research was conducted. It is divided into four sub-sections: Sub-section 4.3.1 explains the criteria for the case study selection. Sub-section 4.3.2 is about the interviewees and the sampling techniques used while Sub-section 4.3.3 analyses how access to the gated community’s residents and other interviewees was granted. Finally, Sub-section 4.3.4 is about data analysis.

#### **4.3.1 Case study selection**

Prior to doing the fieldwork, a pilot project was carried out in June 2002 (seven months before the main fieldwork), aimed at selecting the case study for the research located in the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza (MAM). Four gated communities’ residents, contacted through snowballing sampling, were interviewed. Two of them lived in Palmares and the other two lived in “Club de Campo Mendoza”. The interview schedule for gated communities’ residents was tested during that stage. The main conclusion arrived at was that it was best to concentrate on one case study as there were no relevant differences in lifestyle influenced by the type of gated community where residents lived (i.e. closed neighbourhood or “*club de campo*”).

Palmares was chosen as the research case study, according to three criteria: location, size, and year when the settlement was built. Location was the main criterion since it was essential that the chosen gated community was situated close to other “non-gated” neighbourhoods to be able to have potential social interactions with their residents (see Figure 5.10 in Chapter 5). Palmares is located in a peri-central area of the city surrounded by a diverse group of neighbourhoods, as explained in Chapter 5. As for size, the settlement needed to be large enough to provide a considerable number of residents to be interviewed and to be able to have an independent life as well as providing activities for the residents, as is the case of gated communities in other Argentinian cities. Palmares is one of the largest gated communities in MAM with 260 families living there at the time of the fieldwork. As shown in Appendix A (Sub-section A.2.3 and Table A.3), most gated communities in Mendoza have less than 100 households. The larger number of families provided an opportunity for the

thesis to discover more diverse life experiences and viewpoints amongst residents as well as having more options to select interviewees. Furthermore, size becomes relevant when considering gated communities. The larger the residential scheme, the more likely it could be a “self-contained world”, as mentioned in Chapter 2, as a consequence of its residents demanding more services and amenities within the settlement. This might imply changes in residents’ social practices. Finally, the time when the gated community was started was fundamental for consideration for it had to have been occupied for at least two years to give residents some time to get used to the lifestyle of living in gated communities and to have clearly established and regularly performed social practices. Concerning the time when the settlement was started, Palmares is one of the oldest gated communities in MAM. The first residents moved there in 1995.

In addition to these criteria, Palmares was selected because of its prestige within Mendocinean society. This prestige is based on four main reasons. Firstly, the existence of a shopping centre next to it (as shown in Chapter 5) made Palmares a neighbourhood that is visible when arriving to the shopping centre and from the “Corredor del Oeste” highway. Citizens could see that it was a neighbourhood in permanent expansion. Secondly, the developing company, “Presidente”, is a successful enterprise since all its projects are of good quality and sell very rapidly. Thirdly, security measures are very impressive in Palmares: fingerprints scanning, guards everywhere and control of guests, workers and service providers. Finally, a handful of “celebrities”, especially “new rich”<sup>43</sup> families, live in Palmares and this has created an image of *“successful people equals successful neighbourhood”*. These four elements give a prestigious image to this gated community. Residents were one of the groups of interviewees. The next sub-section explains who the interviewees were and how they were selected.

#### **4.3.2. Interviewees and sampling techniques**

The semi-structured interview was the main research method used. It allowed for an understanding on how residents and non-residents performed their “neighbouring social practices” and on the viewpoints on segregation and these practices from the

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<sup>43</sup> “New rich” or “*nouveau riche*” are people who have acquired wealth within their generation. It is the opposite of “new poor”, as explained in Chapter 2.

different actors involved in the research. There were different issues discussed during the interviews as explained in Appendix B. As the research developed, new issues came up during the fieldwork and received attention, whilst others became of minor importance.

Interviewees were divided into three groups (see Table B.1. in Appendix B). The first and main group was formed by the gated community's residents. The second group was made up by the residents of the four surrounding neighbourhoods: "Altos de la Puntilla", "Fuchs", "Obras Sanitarias" and "Urundel". The third group of interviewees was called "other sources" and included social actors whose viewpoints were relevant because of their job positions, knowledge and expertise. In their case, their social practices were not considered because these were not relevant to the analysis of urban social group segregation. Four sub-groups made up this last group: 1) gated community staff; 2) developers; 3) staff from provincial and local governments; and 4) "others", comprising a diverse group of experts and professionals who had contact with Palmares.

Palmares' residents were selected mainly through snowball sampling, as suggested by Bernard (1995) when working with small or difficult-to-find populations. The selection started through five residents who were the researcher's personal contacts living in the gated community. They accepted to be interviewed and gave contact details of other residents who could be willing to participate in the research. These later provided new names and the process was replicated. Most contacts were made through phone calls. The snowball selection was complemented by quota sampling as throughout the selection of "insiders" different quotas were considered. The quota criteria were: age, gender, length of time in the gated community, and location of their houses. These were considered as important criteria for the analysis of social practices and viewpoints. Thus, different quotas were established, in terms of age, for example, children/teenagers, young people and adults; and in relation to the location of their houses: first or second stage of the residential settlement. The internal group they belonged to within the gated community's residents was added during the research as an extra criterion as several internal groups were identified based on interests, power relations, social bonds, time living in the neighbourhood and housing location. Finally, two residents of Palmares were selected through purposive

sampling. These were the two presidents of A.Pro.CUP.<sup>44</sup>. Their opinions were essential to get information about the neighbourhood. They also provided access to the gated community staff.

“Outsiders” were also selected through snowball, purposive and quota sampling. The criteria considered for the quota were: membership of the residents’ association, age and gender. A balance of interviewees as regards these variables was kept throughout the field research for both groups of “insiders” and “outsiders”. “Outsiders” were approached in their neighbourhoods, usually on the streets, and asked about their willingness to be interviewed. They also provided the contact details of other members of the outside communities to be interviewed and some names of members of the residents’ association, who were selected by purposive sampling.

“Other sources” (staff from Palmares and from the government and other social actors - see Table B.1) were also selected through a purposive sampling based on their expertise, knowledge and position held. It was considered relevant to interview members of the homeowners’ association of Palmares and the residents’ associations of the four outside neighbourhoods as they could provide data related to some “neighbouring social practices”. The fieldwork was completed when “theoretical saturation” (Glaser & Strauss, 1999) was arrived at, implying that the data obtained on several topics discussed during interviews became repetitive and did not provide new insights.

Ninety four semi-structured interviews were conducted during the fieldwork, in which 95 people were interviewed. This mismatch happened because two people (the manager and the security chief of Palmares) were interviewed twice and there were three interviews in which the respondents were a couple. The average duration of the interviews was fifty minutes.

Interviewed residents from Palmares had lived in the neighbourhood from three months to seven years. The length of time of living in the gated community was considered an important variable when analysing social practices since it means

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<sup>44</sup> Manuel was the president of A.Pro.CUP. until April 2003. With new authorities elected, Felipe became president for the period April 2003-April 2004.



residents would have already adapted to the new place of residence and acquired their social practices. It was also important to contrast different lengths of time living there. A gender balance among the interviewees was kept throughout the process of interviewees' selection.

The age of the interviewed gated community's residents ranged from 13 to 80 years old (See Table B.3 in Appendix B for the distribution of the interviewed residents of Palmares by gender and age groupings). Most households in Palmares were constituted by a heterosexual couple and their children, as explained in Chapter 5. It was not possible to get access to children because of ethical and legal issues and also because their parents were reluctant to let their children being interviewed. This was one of the difficulties in trying to get the viewpoints of all groups living inside and outside Palmares. Therefore, as explained in Chapters 7 and 8, the practices conducted by children living in the gated community and also in the outside neighbourhoods were explained by adults and the viewpoints are those of adults and not of the children.

As regards staff from Palmares, the chief of the security personnel was one of the most collaborative interviewees. He was interviewed twice as new issues came up after the first interview. He acted as gatekeeper, granting authorisation to interview security guards suggested by him according to their roles and tasks. Security guards were interviewed during their working hours in the gated community, which was probably not the best location because sometimes there were residents passing by that even if they were not listening to the conversation, were looking at and that created some sort of pressure. However, it was not possible to interview the guards in other places. The manager of Palmares, who is an employee of A.Pro.CUP. and is in charge of the administration of the gated community, was also interviewed twice.

"Outsiders" were the second group of social actors examined, with whom Palmares' residents were expected to interact when carrying out their "neighbouring social practices". It was important to first establish the socio-economic level of the residents of the four outside neighbourhoods to make comparisons amongst themselves and between them and Palmares, and to try to find similarities and differences, as established in the research project (Section 4.2). The socio-economic

level was intended to be identified through the examination of four variables: income, education level, consumption and type of housing. However, it was difficult to get data on the first three variables. Interviewees would not disclose their income level since this was considered as confidential. This was overcome by getting information about their jobs, as explained in Chapter 5. In terms of consumption, some information was obtained throughout the interviews while discussing their social practices and also through the observation of their houses and cars. The type of housing was the most useful variable and could easily be observed since most interviews took place in the interviewees' houses.

Thus, although it was not initially planned in the research project, the type of housing became the most important element to classify the neighbourhoods as the four outside neighbourhoods varied amongst themselves in the type of housing concerned. A typology of housing<sup>45</sup> to classify these neighbourhoods was constructed as a result of direct observation during the fieldwork (See Table B4 in Appendix B). Following this typology, the four outside neighbourhoods could be classified as follows:

- "Altos de la Puntilla": Type 2: Good quality house
- "Fuchs": Type 3: Regular quality house
- "Obras Sanitarias": Type 3: Regular quality house
- "Urundel": Type 4: Bad quality house

Both members of the residents' associations and the "common residents" from these neighbourhoods were interviewed. The ages of the interviewees corresponded to the most typical age groups in each neighbourhood. Thus, while "Urundel" and "Altos de la Puntilla" had more diverse populations in relation to age, "Fuchs" was mainly a neighbourhood of "empty-nesters" and young adults (see Table B.5 in Appendix B). All different sub-groups, as regards age, gender, and participation in the board of residents were represented in the groups of interviewees. The differentiation of neighbourhoods according to socio-economic levels was not easy to establish and the house where they lived became the most significant variable for this distinction.

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<sup>45</sup> It is worth noting that this typology does not cover all types of housing to be found, but only those of the area where Palmares is located and is valid only for this research.

The combination of snowball, quota and purposive sampling techniques proved useful for access to all social actors considered in this research and kept a balance regarding their ascribed characteristics. The next sub-section explains the process of getting access to the interviewees.

#### **4.3.3. Gaining access to interviewees**

Gaining access to interviewees was sometimes difficult. People were busy and it was hard to locate them at home or at work. Getting access to the gated community's residents had to be done very carefully as having only one case study, failure to do so would have meant the failure of the research. In the case of Palmares' residents, the first step to access residents was contacting acquaintances and family friends living there or who knew people living in Palmares, using the snowballing technique, as explained in the previous sub-section. The second step was to contact residents by phone and arrange an interview. There was no contact with A.Pro.CUP. until the second month of the fieldwork to remain neutral to its influence, particularly in case this association would be against this research.

Access to interviewees and data was negotiated and renegotiated throughout the research process. Getting empathy with Palmares' residents required the consideration of several issues, such as going to the neighbourhood by car or on foot. The latter could give an unfavourable impression to the residents, particularly in Mendoza where social image is highly valued amongst particular social groups. Dress code was also of concern since it is considered that a researcher had to appear to be a peer, in this case, to the gated communities' residents or to the outside communities respectively and be dressed accordingly. Personal and family networks whilst contacting affluent or important people (i.e. the mayor and Palmares' developer) turned out to be crucial and key factors for the success of the research.

There was a constant surveillance every time the researcher was in the gated community, checking whether she went to the house she had to go or elsewhere and not allowing her to wonder around the settlement. Although authorisation to take pictures was granted by the president of A.Pro.CUP., the prohibition to take pictures of security devices and people inside was emphasised and the manager of Palmares later checked all the pictures taken. All these security measures and keeping privacy

reflect not only the priorities and obsessions with these issues, but also the fact that the researcher was always considered an “outsider” and someone who has to be controlled.

The interviews of the members of the surrounding communities started later than the “insiders” for two reasons: a) “outsiders” were not the main study group and the data provided by them were useful for comparison with Palmares’ data. Therefore, it was better to start with Palmares and have a general idea of the most important issues and then discuss these issues with the outside residents; b) It was difficult to contact “outsiders” because they were not eager to talk about their relation with Palmares. They did not see any benefit for themselves from this research. However, it was a good opportunity to talk about Palmares and give their viewpoints about the gated community for those “outsiders” who felt that their voices were not heard by the local government. After a few weeks, it was possible to convince people about the importance of their participation and get enough interviewees although the number of people who refused to participate in the research was bigger than that of the other groups of interviewees.

Access to Palmares staff was granted by Manuel, the president of A.Pro.CUP.<sup>46</sup> and later by the security chief. Getting access to the government staff was complicated since in 2002 Palmares became a sensitive topic in Mendoza because of its precarious legal status, as explained in Chapter 5. In this context, finding documents from the local government about Palmares and convincing municipal staff to talk about Palmares was not an easy task. However, it was possible to interview six members of the local government, including the mayor of Godoy Cruz Municipality and the Director of Urban Planning. Concerning the provincial government, it was impossible to get an interview with the director of Urban Planning and Environment. The professionals working in that office were also unwilling to be interviewed. Luckily, it was possible to interview two of their architects through attendance at a seminar at the university during the fieldwork.

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<sup>46</sup> See footnote 44.

This section reviews the process of gaining access to interviewees, which was the most difficult task throughout the fieldwork. Palmares' residents were not easy to contact and the outside residents were not interested in talking about Palmares either because of a sort of indifference toward the gated community or because of envy and jealousy, as explained in Chapter 6. Some actors in the "other sources" group also proved difficult to contact. Despite these difficulties, access to all important actors was obtained. The next sub-section comments on how the data analysis was done.

#### **4.3.4. Data analysis**

Since this research used a qualitative methodology, the approach to data analysis was flexible and moulded to the researcher's needs and interests as well as the research development. Data analysis is a dynamic and iterative process where there is a constant reference to the conceptual framework and possibly a redefinition of the latter as well as a creative process where the researcher has freedom to play with the data, the main goal being to get deeper understanding of the object of study and to explore meanings.

The thesis followed a data analysis method closely related to the one suggested by Steven Taylor and Robert Bogdan (1984), which consists of three stages: a) identification of themes and development of concepts; b) coding data and redefining categories; and c) understanding data in the context in which they were collected. The first phase refers to discovering emerging themes, which are theoretical constructions identified before, during and after data gathering. These were initially culled from the literature review, such as the reasons for moving to gated communities, or constructed in the conceptual and methodological frameworks, like the set of "neighbouring social practices" and viewpoints proposed in the research project. The second phase is coding. It is done by sorting data from the interviews transcripts, analysing narratives according to themes identified in relation to the research questions and theoretical proposition. Coding was done with the help of N-Vivo, a qualitative software that helps the building up of 'codebooks' with nodes (themes or categories) as well as memos and reports and of the theoretical

relationships between data<sup>47</sup>. The third phase of data analysis involves the interpretation of data in relation to the context and the circumstances in which they are obtained, to who is present during the interview, and to the mood of the interviewee. Assumptions and notes made by the researcher during this phase were of significant help. A log of events during the fieldwork research acquired relevance in this phase, serving as *aide-mémoire*.

#### 4.4. Conclusions

This chapter has elaborated the methodological framework of the thesis, explaining the research questions and the theoretical proposition in Section 4.1. The questions are mainly “how” questions, which try to shed light on how the process of urban social group segregation by gated communities’ residents takes place. They seek to support or contradict the assumption that gated communities encourage segregation. The theoretical proposition of the thesis emphasises that “neighbouring social practices” by gated communities’ residents lead to urban social group segregation as a consequence of their viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community.

Section 4.2 presented the research project with the identification of a set of ten “neighbouring social practices” and viewpoints, and considered their meanings in relation to urban social group segregation. These selected practices are the most relevant for the examination of the process of urban social group segregation by gated communities’ residents and are analysed in Chapters 7 and 8.

Finally Section 4.3 commented on how the research process took place explaining that semi-structured interviews and observation were the research methods used. It commented on how interviewees were selected and how the access to them was obtained, elaborating on the main difficulties faced during the fieldwork. The process of data analysis was also explained in this section. The next chapter analyses Palmares, the case study, considering its layout and main features based on the data collected. It provides the research findings about how the gated community was developed, its legal status, the homeowners’ association, code of conduct and its residents’ characterisation.

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<sup>47</sup> Matt Stroh (2000a) gives a short induction on how to use NUD\*IST (earlier version of N-VIVO) for qualitative data analysis.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **PALMARES: THE CASE STUDY**

#### **Introduction**

Palmares is a gated community located in the Municipality of Godoy Cruz, which is one of the municipalities of the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza (MAM), Argentina, and was selected as the case study for the thesis. Similar to what happened in the whole country, social inequalities increased in MAM, as explained in Appendix A, especially in the first years of this Millennium, when the number of citizens below the poverty line raised. Crime and fear of crime rates have also risen during recent years. At the same time, gated communities have multiplied in the country and in MAM. However, there is no legislation regulating their development in Mendoza, neither regulating land uses. These closed settlements currently follow for their approval at the provincial level the same procedures than “open neighbourhoods”. Municipalities are the authorities to regulate on these issues, resulting in each municipality having its own policy on the topic, creating a non-uniform treatment for gated communities’ projects.

This chapter analyses the development of gated communities in Godoy Cruz, the municipality where Palmares is located, and their legal status, and the opinion of the local government on this topic. Following the definition of gated communities previously elaborated by the thesis, the different attributes of the gated community are considered: layout, residents’ social composition, security provision within its premises, the organisation and role of the homeowners’ association and internal codes that regulate everyday life within its walls. The surrounding local communities are also described.

#### **5.1. Gated communities in Godoy Cruz**

There are more than 70 gated communities in MAM<sup>48</sup>. Seven of these are located in the Municipality of Godoy Cruz, Palmares being one of them. This section examines

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<sup>48</sup> See Figure A.4 and Table A.3 (Appendix A).

the role of the local government in relation to the development of gated communities and their legal status.

There are different types of gated communities in Argentina, as elaborated in Chapter 2. Within those types, five “closed neighbourhoods” and one “garden-tower” have been built in Godoy Cruz over the last 15 years and a mega-project called “Palmares Valley”<sup>49</sup> was started in 2007. The first gated community built in 1993, called “El Escorial”, is located in a peri-central area next to a motorway. It has 40 houses, in 400-square-metre plots. It is surrounded by a brick wall and has a barrier at the entrance, with 24-hour security. The second gated community built in Godoy Cruz was Palmares. Three more, “Rincón del Cerro”, “Rincón de Arizu” and “Sol Trapiche” were built afterwards. With the exception of Palmares, these gated communities are of a small size with 40 houses on average. The “garden-tower”, called “Villa Mediterránea”, is described in Sub-section A.2.3 (Appendix A).

There is no legislation regulating gated communities at the municipal level in Godoy Cruz. Projects are built according to Provincial Law 4.341 on Land Subdivision, which is applied to any new settlement constructed<sup>50</sup>. Both provincial and municipal governments have to grant authorisation for new constructions. The project goes first to the Land Subdivision Board (Provincial Government) and once approved, it goes to the local government. According to Land Subdivision Law 4.341, in the case of schemes larger than 20 hectares, the developer has to donate a piece of land as well as the streets to the municipality. Streets become public places and the piece of land, which can be inside or outside the settlement, is used for communal public infrastructure. It is also possible for the developer to buy the streets, according to National Law 13.512, which could then be for exclusive private use.

“El Escorial” followed this second option and bought the streets to make them private. Therefore, their residents were allowed to put a barrier at the entrance, with the surrounding perimeter closed for public access. In the case of Palmares, the project was approved as a public settlement by the provincial and local governments, which means that the streets and a space for community activities had to be donated

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<sup>49</sup> “Palmares Valley” is different from Palmares, but is built by the same company.

<sup>50</sup> Appendix A presents the legal framework for gated communities in Mendoza.



to the municipality. The developer did this. However, since the beginning, Palmares was conceived by its developer as a gated community and its perimeter was surrounded by barbed wire, fences or walls and access was restricted, although streets were public.

Palmares' residents were not informed about this and believed they had bought a property in a gated community, although the settlement did not have the approval to be closed. To overcome this contradiction, the government of Godoy Cruz issued a by-law<sup>51</sup> (Ordinance 4.217/98) in 1998 saying that the municipality accepted the donation of streets by the developer, but recognising that those streets had restricted circulation (Honorable Concejo Deliberante de Godoy Cruz, 1998). The by-law does not establish the exact meaning of this "restriction". In 2001, during the electoral campaigns, a few councillors from Godoy Cruz threatened to issue a new by-law authorising public access to Palmares, arguing that the surrounding communities had the right to use those streets as they were public. This originated a public debate in the media since the developer and other councillors argued that that decision would be against the interests of Palmares' residents who believed they lived in a private and closed neighbourhood. In addition, Palmares' residents threatened to sue the municipality if the by-law 4.217/98 was modified<sup>52</sup>. In August 2002 the municipality issued a new by-law (Ordinance 4.829/02) stating that the streets of Palmares had been donated to the municipality, but they had restricted access and circulation and that Palmares was responsible for goods belonging to the public domain within the premises (Honorable Concejo Deliberante de Godoy Cruz, 2002a). Finally, in September 2002, the mayor of Godoy Cruz issued a decree (Decree 0993/02) stating that "restricted access and circulation" means that pedestrian and vehicular access to Palmares is restricted to all non-residents. Access would have to be authorised by security staff on behalf of the A.Pro.CUP. (Palmares homeowners' association). Police, fire brigade, municipal authorities, ambulances, gas, electricity and water

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<sup>51</sup> In the Argentinian legal system, the councillors of the local government issue by-laws and the mayor (the head of the local government) issues decrees. National and Provincial parliaments issue national and provincial laws respectively and the president and the governor of each province issue national and provincial decrees respectively.

<sup>52</sup> The provincial justice proved later that some councillors were involved in an extortion case as they had asked the developer of Palmares a sum of money for not issuing a new by-law. These alleged bribes were investigated by the law courts between 2002 and 2008, making Palmares a sensitive issue to be discussed in the local government. For more information on this, see articles in the local media: *Diario Los Andes*, 27/11/01; 28/11/01; 29/03/03; 06/04/03 and 07/05/08. *Revista El Sol*, 04/04/03.

supply companies are exempted from this restriction. A.Pro.CUP. would be legally responsible for accidents and damages in the public streets within Palmares' premises (Departamento Ejecutivo, Municipalidad de Godoy Cruz, 2002). This was ratified by another by-law 4.879/02 (Honorable Concejo Deliberante de Godoy Cruz, 2002b).

In 2003, there was a public audience (see Appendix A) to discuss a Provincial Law Draft on gated communities. On that occasion the Municipality of Godoy Cruz made public its position towards the development of this type of residential settlement in an unpublished document submitted to the Provincial Chamber of Deputies. The document argued that gated communities should be discouraged as they create urban and environmental conflicts, such as closure of circulation lanes and traffic congestion, as well as changes in the urban landscape. It also mentioned social consequences, arguing that a feeling of inequality amongst different social groups was bound to develop, encouraging "the feeling of individualism of socially homogeneous groups, to the detriment of the concept of community and citizen cooperation" (Municipalidad de Godoy Cruz, 2003: 2).

The document stated that Mendoza should have a law regulating gated communities and establishing restrictions to the growth of these residential settlements because of their negative impacts. Furthermore, it said that the Law Draft was too general, without considering the technical aspects, and consequently "it will encourage the creation of residential 'ghettos' to the detriment of urban public space and its use on behalf of all city dwellers" (Ibid.: 3). The document sustained that according to Land Subdivision Law 4.341, when a new scheme was developed it benefited from the services and infrastructure already existing in the area and therefore as compensation from those benefits, the new settlement had to give the streets and other spaces to the public domain. Thus, both parts would benefit and integrate. In the case of gated communities, this balance might be broken, creating a privileged situation for their residents since these new residents could make use of the services and infrastructure provided by the city, without giving public access to the spaces within the gated communities' premises. This document made explicit the negative impacts of gated communities and the opposition of the local government to this type of settlement.

However, the document seemed to have been contradicted by reality, since the same local government in office who wrote it, issued at the same time the by-law 4.879/02 restricting public access to Palmares.

The local authorities of the Municipality of Godoy Cruz argued that the main reason for the increase of gated communities in Mendoza had been urban insecurity. Nevertheless, since two of the gated communities in Godoy Cruz were built during the 1990s, when urban insecurity was not as acute as in the beginning of the 2000s, their development could have also been influenced by other reasons. According to the mayor of Godoy Cruz: *"The 1990s was a decade marked by values related to aesthetics more than ethics, I think, and the increase of gated communities must be linked to that. But from a more benevolent view, I would say it's related to the claim of security... The 1990s was marked by strong individualism, a crazy race of 'save yourself if you can', stepping on the heads of others, and a lack of solidarity. And I think people lived secluded lives inside their own houses, finally extending that principle for enclosure inside a neighbourhood"* (Ciro, mayor of Godoy Cruz)<sup>53</sup>. This opinion illustrates the prevalent values over the past years, and the relevance of individualism and aesthetics, and how the impact of the crisis of urban security became more significant.

The mayor justified gated communities built in the beginning of the 2000s on security grounds, as a consequence of the inability of the state to provide security: *"There has been a very strong increase in insecurity and manifested difficulties of the state to provide security. People, at the end, resort to non-traditional mechanisms. Living in a closed neighbourhood is one of them. Facing that reality that overwhelms me, that I dislike, that very much worries us, I have to understand the feeling of these people. Therefore, I insist, today I have a very different view than I had some years ago when I nearly saw gated communities as ghettos isolated from society"* (Ciro)<sup>54</sup>. This argument shows the change in perception over the years in relation to gated communities: considered as ghettos in the 1990s and accepted with more tolerance in the beginning of the 2000s due to increased urban insecurity.

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<sup>53</sup> Hereafter, and throughout the thesis, all interviewees are given false Argentinian names to protect their identities. See Appendix C for key characteristics of each interviewee. Since interviews were conducted in Spanish, all narratives were translated by S.R.

<sup>54</sup> See Roitman (2008b: 5).

Gating-up as a means of protection was the main justification, as municipality staff explained: *"The better-off groups have been obliged to resort to the closed neighbourhood to preserve their possessions"* (Ernesto, Director of Urban Planning, Municipality of Godoy Cruz). However, it is important to note that it seemed to be easier to justify the development of gated communities on the grounds of security than to base it on a change of values, especially when residents explained their reasons for living in this type of settlement. The search for quieter places was suggested as another reason for moving to gated communities: *"The first consideration is... having a quiet neighbourhood... kids riding bikes and skating... and then the issue of security as it is today"* (Asdrúbal, councillor of the Municipality of Godoy Cruz).

Municipal staff said they would allow new gated communities in Godoy Cruz if these would follow all regulations and if they did not entail a closure or interruption of the road network and circulation. This was the major disadvantage of gated communities, according to the local government, since the closure of streets interrupts the normal circulation of vehicles, especially of emergency services, and creates traffic congestion. On the other hand, the government recognised the financial benefits of gated communities for the municipality as their residents are 'rich' taxpayers: *"That favours us, from the economic point of view. It helps us to provide services for those who can't pay. Thus, they're welcome... But I don't want this to be a city in which there would be only urban schemes of this nature. One wants people who identify with their city as well. People who feel the city as their own, who live and understand its problems and get involved in them"* (Ciro)<sup>55</sup>. The local government was aware of the social consequences of the privatisation of the space: *"We communicate in society mainly through public space. If we close neighbourhoods and put squares inside, we're affecting things... I can't imagine a large city converted in a continual sequence of gated communities... It'd be a place where I wouldn't like living. My capacity to move would be affected... and also the time that others take to come to my house when I need them..."* (Ernesto).

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<sup>55</sup> See Roitman (2008b: 6).

These views show that the negative impacts of gated communities are known, but it would be possible to justify the building of more because of the growth of urban insecurity and the valuable source of revenue they represent for governments. The result is the existing contradictory situation: though governments seem to be against the development of gated communities, at the same time they give authorisation for new projects to be built. In addition, the lack of legislation on gated communities at the national and provincial levels makes the control of this type of residential settlements more difficult for the local government. Municipal authorisation is sometimes regulated by a general by-law on gated communities, whilst there are also case-by-case by-laws, which makes approvals more arbitrary and encourages illegal practices. Palmares is one gated community that has received some special treatment through particular by-laws. This shows that the precarious existing legal situation can be easily manipulated according to political interests.

## 5.2. Palmares' location

Palmares' full name is "Conjunto Urbano Palmares" ("Palmares Urban Scheme"). It is located on the edge of the districts of Benegas and Sarmiento, in Godoy Cruz (Figure 5.1<sup>56</sup>). The above mentioned shopping centre, "Palmares Open Mall", built by the same company as Palmares, was opened in 1995 and enlarged in 1998. It has 100 stores in addition to a supermarket, coffee places, a multiplex cinema, a bank, a medical centre, gym, discotheque, fast food places and restaurants (Palmares Open Mall website<sup>57</sup>). On Palmares' south side there is an aerodrome, a neighbourhood called "Portal de Benegas" that became semi-private<sup>58</sup> in 2002 and a chapel with a sanctuary called *Shoenstat* with a church (Figure 5.2). "Corredor del Oeste", the highway on the western side of Palmares, has been a key determinant to the gated community's success, making commuting to the city centre faster.

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<sup>56</sup> This base map of the MAM layout was taken from Mendoza Government website <http://www.seguridad.mendoza.gov.ar/tetra/DETALLE%20ZONA%20A.jpg> and later modified.

<sup>57</sup> See [www.palmares.com.ar](http://www.palmares.com.ar)

<sup>58</sup> This is a "semi-private" neighbourhood and not a gated community. It is considered "semi-private" since it was built as open and its streets and squares are public, but residents placed a manned barrier at the only entrance to the neighbourhood to control access. However, this is not legal and not allowed by the local government.

*Figure 5.1. Palmares and Godoy Cruz within MAM*

*Figure 5.2. Palmares and its surrounding area*

There is an informal settlement called “Urundel” on the north-west side and three more “open neighbourhoods”: “Obras Sanitarias”, “Fuchs” and “Altos de la Puntilla”. These are the four neighbourhoods outside Palmares closest to the gated community and analysed in Section 5.6. Finally, the back of the shopping centre and a main road called “*San Martín Street*” (also known as “*Panamericana Street*”) form its east side.

### 5.3. The evolution of Palmares

Palmares was developed in 1994 by “Presidente”, a real estate company in Mendoza. It was the first gated community built by this company: “*The model of the gated community was inspired by gated communities in California*”, according to Ubaldo, one of the partners of the Palmares’ project. Palmares is eight kilometres south from the city centre of Mendoza. It is an intermediate location between the city centre and the area of “Chacras de Coria”, one of the most affluent suburbs with weekend houses and lately also gated communities (see Figure 5.1). The land where Palmares is located had previously an agricultural use, which shows the expansion of the city into fertile lands, especially used for cultivating vineyards.

Palmares has 60 hectares and has been developed in three stages. The building of the first stage started in 1994 and was 85 percent completed in 2003 (Figure 5.3). The first families moved there in 1995. The building of the second stage started in 1999 (Figure 5.4) and was 70 percent completed in 2005. In 2003, when the research fieldwork took place, Palmares (first and second stages) consisted of 700 plots. There were 260 permanently occupied<sup>59</sup> houses (built on one or more plots, as explained later) and 130 houses under construction, as mentioned by Facundo (Palmares’ manager). Later, in April 2005, there were 410 occupied houses, 70 houses under construction and 90 empty plots<sup>60</sup>.

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<sup>59</sup> There are some gated communities that have both permanently occupied and weekend houses. This is not allowed in Palmares where all houses have to be permanently occupied.

<sup>60</sup> Data provided by the manager of Palmares.

The third stage (Figure 5.5) consisted of 200 plots that went on sale in December 2002. It was not part of the research since it was not built when the research fieldwork took place. In December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005, the third stage of Palmares was included as part of the gated community, taking off the barbed wire that was separating the second and third stages. In April 2006, 10 houses were occupied in the third stage, 50 houses were under construction, 20 plots were still on sale and the rest were still vacant plots. There were 550 families living in the three stages of Palmares at that time<sup>61</sup>.

In 1994, when Palmares' project was presented for approval, the value of the land was US\$ 3 per square metre<sup>64</sup>. Later, in 1998, when services were supplied, the price increased to US\$ 100 per square metre and then to US\$ 130 in April 2006<sup>65</sup>.



*Figure 5.3: Houses in the first stage of Palmares (top)*<sup>62</sup>

*Figure 5.4: Second stage of Palmares, under construction (centre)*<sup>63</sup>

*Figure 5.5: Major works in the third stage of Palmares (bottom)*

<sup>61</sup> Data provided by Palmares manager.

<sup>62</sup> All pictures (except otherwise stated) were taken by S.R. with authorisation.

<sup>63</sup> Picture provided by "Presidente".

<sup>64</sup> In Argentina, during the period 1991-2001, 1 *peso* equalled US\$ 1 due to the Convertibility Law.

<sup>65</sup> Data about price variations was obtained through two sources: 1- Information from Los Andes (Mendocinean newspaper) during the period 1993-2006; 2- Interviews to Ubaldo (partner of Palmares' project) and Micaela (real estate agent).



The land price was one of the highest in the Mendocinean real estate market. Most gated communities in MAM have large single plots of more than 800 square metres. This is different in Palmares, where single plots have between 390 and 580 square metres (with a few exceptions). This smaller size made plots in Palmares more affordable. It was possible to buy more than one plot, in case the buyer wanted a larger piece of land, and use them as a single unit. This multiple use of land allowed residents to build a house on one or more plots, even on one and a half or one and a third plots.

Stage One of Palmares was aimed at attracting busy young couples with or without children, identified by the developers as upper-middle class. As wife and husband would work, the nearness to shops and services as well as flexible opening times was essential. Therefore, the shopping centre was built and considered an added value to the gated community, according to the developers and residents. Later, Palmares was offered to “empty-nesters”<sup>66</sup> who neither wanted to live in the city centre nor far away in suburbs like “Chacras de Coria”, nor wanted a large plot of land. Finally, the target was enlarged to those who could afford buying a plot there, building a house following the internal rules of construction, and were willing to pay monthly maintenance fees. Some of these, but only a few, were “new rich” families.

In the Argentinian context, Palmares’ residents might be considered as part of the “successful middle-class” (Svampa, 2004) who managed to adjust to the new economic rules of the 1990s and survived the crisis of 2001. These successful middle-class people seemed in need of making the difference between them and those who suffered a downward mobility more explicit as explained in Chapter 2. This is sustained by Arizaga (2005) who argues that gated communities’ residents are not of the elite class, but in a middle-stratum that needs to differentiate from those who have fallen down as a consequence of adjustment policies. Strategies to get access to this distinction, such as access to mortgages that allow middle-class families to buy a plot and build a house in a gated community, were pursued. The social composition of Palmares’ residents is discussed in detail later in Section 5.5.

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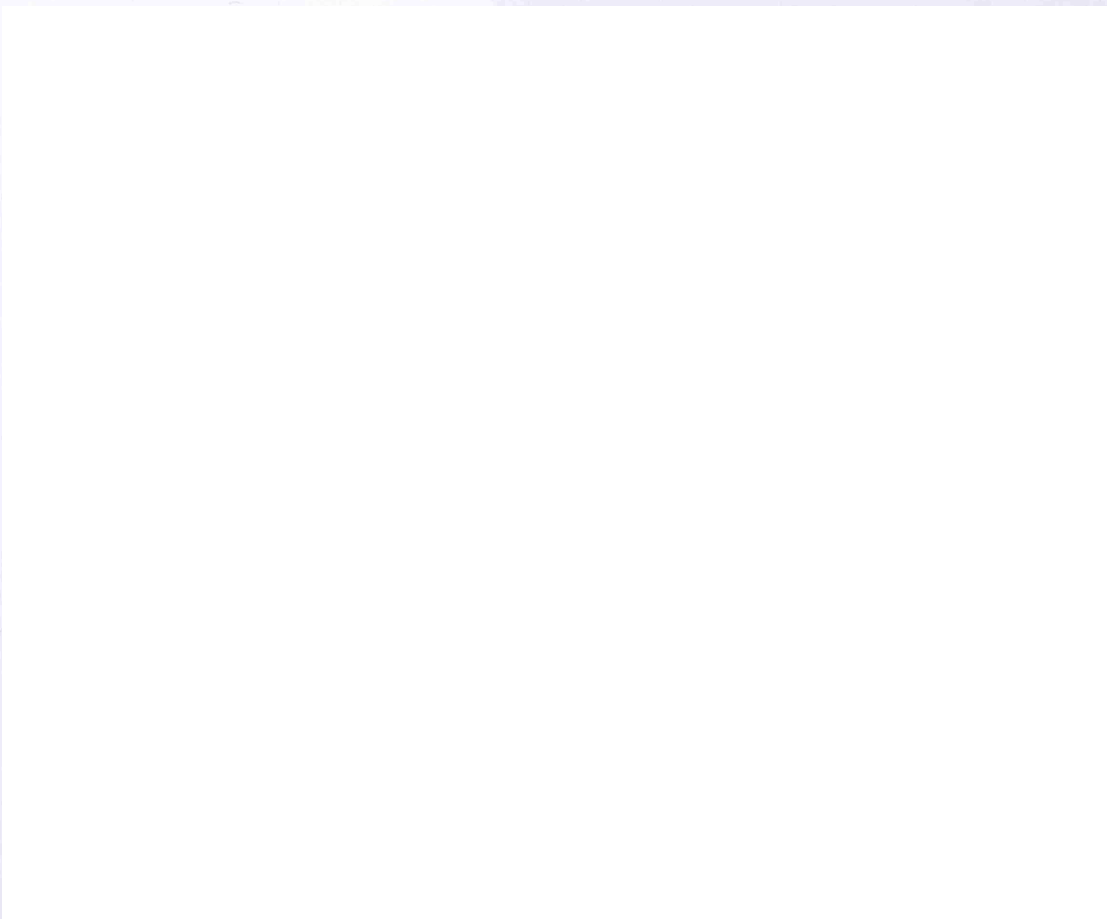
<sup>66</sup> “Empty-nesters” are couples whose children have moved away from their houses and therefore have the “empty nest syndrome”.

This section has explained how Palmares was created and its evolution in different stages. The next section provides a detailed insight of the gated community as it was in 2003 when the fieldwork was conducted to understand its layout and key features.

gate, which staffed 24-hour a day.

#### **5.4. Going around Palmares in 2003**

Palmares is fully surrounded by a wall of concrete blocks, with the exception of a small part closed with barbed wire. Figure 5.6 is an aerial view of Palmares in 2003, with the red line indicating its borders. The first stage is at the bottom and the second stage is where the central communal garden is situated. The third stage appears as a vacant plot since it had not been developed at the time of the research. It is possible to see a section of the shopping centre on the left bottom corner. Figure 5.7 shows the concrete wall and Figure 5.8 the barbed wire.



*Figure 5.6: Aerial view of the three stages of Palmares*<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Picture provided by “Presidente” in 2003. This picture was published in Roitman (2007a).

There were three entrances for vehicles into Palmares, at the time of the research. All had a gate-house staffed 24-hour-a-day by security personnel. The main entrance (Figure 5.9) is located off *San Martín Street* at Number 1 in the Palmares Plan (Figure 5.10), which indicates important features of the gated community. This entrance is mainly for residents and guests.

There are two lanes to access through the main entrance, as shown in Figure 5.9. Exiting the gated community is faster and easier (Figure 5.11) than entering and there are also two lanes for that. The entrance lane for residents (on the right side in Figure 5.9) has an electric unmanned barrier that requires the driver's fingerprint to be scanned for it to automatically lift up and allow access. The second one (where the vehicle is in Figure 5.9) is for guests and has a manned barrier. The visitor would arrive at the entrance, roll down the window and inform the security guard of whom s/he intends to visit.

Figure 5.7: Concrete wall surrounding Palmares (top)  
Figure 5.8: Barbed wire division between second and third stages (centre)  
Figure 5.9: Main access (entrance) to Palmares (bottom)



*Figure 5.10: Palmares plan*

The guard would ask for identification and then phone the family being visited and ask for permission to receive the guest. If this is granted, the guard would fill in an entrance sheet with the guest's personal information (name, identification card number and car plate number). Once the registration is done, the barrier would be lifted up and the visitor would be finally inside Palmares driving up *Paul Harris Boulevard*, the main road of the gated community (B in Palmares Plan).

Heading towards the west through *Paul Harris Boulevard*, there are 12 blocks of houses which make up the first stage of the neighbourhood (see Palmares Plan). There are five blocks of houses on the right side and seven on the left side. Most houses in the first stage occupy one or one and a half plot (Figure 5.12). Houses are of different sizes, styles and designs and are usually individually designed according to their residents' needs, tastes and desires (Figure 5.13).



*Figure 5.11: Main access (exit) to Palmares*



*Figure 5.12: Palmares first stage (centre)*

*Figure 5.13: Type 2 houses in the first stage (bottom)*

Following the housing typology elaborated for this thesis (see Table B.4 in Appendix B), most houses in the first stage are classified as Type 2 (like the ones in Figure 5.13). These are semi-detached or terraced houses with similar designs, good quality materials, medium size with one or two storeys and built in one plot. There are very few Type 1 houses in the first stage. These are large houses in large plots, individually designed with top quality materials, double garage, large garden and swimming pool. One of them is located at the end of *Paul Harris Boulevard* on the right handside (Figure 5.15 and Number 2 in Palmares Plan). It occupies six plots and has a water fountain at the front. Its owner is the developer of Palmares and owner of the real estate company that built the gated community.



*Figure 5.14: Aerial view of the communal garden (top). Figure 5.15: Type 1 house in the first stage (left).*

*Figure 5.16: Type 1 house in the second stage (Roitman, 2006 & 2005a) (right).*



*Lago Argentino Street* divides the first and second stages of the gated community. *Paul Harris Boulevard* ends in a communal garden (Figures 5.14 and Number 3 in *Palmares Plan*) with an artificial pond. This serves as playground for the children and a meeting place for teenagers.

Going around the communal garden the first house on the right handside is one of the best Type 1 houses of the second stage (Figure 5.16 and Number 4 in *Palmares Plan*). It belongs to a “new rich” family and is built on an eight-plot piece of land. The second stage is less dense than the first one with more houses occupying one and a half or two plots. Most houses are also larger than the ones built in the first stage of the settlement.

Following the roundabout, there is another Type 1 house, which is the largest house occupying 16 plots in the neighbourhood (Number 5 in *Palmares Plan*). Having completed the roundabout and arriving at *Lago Argentino Street* again, one heads north for the office of *Palmares*’ manager and administrative staff. It is located at the end of that road (Number 6 in *Palmares Plan*), next to the service entrance for builders and constructors (Figure 5.17 and Number 7 in *Palmares Plan*). Pedestrian access for other workers (home-helps and gardeners) or residents (mainly teenagers) is also allowed there since there is a bus stop nearby outside the gated community’s

Figure 5.17: Service Entrance (top)

Figure 5.18: *Palmas de Mallorca Boulevard* (bottom)  
(Roitman, 2006 & 2005a)

premises located opposite “Fuchs” and “Altos de la Puntilla”. This second entrance was closed for vehicles at the end of 2003 but remained as a pedestrian access.

Going back to *Lago Argentino Street*, passing the roundabout and taking *Florencia Road* (E in Palmares Plan), there is another Type 1 house at the end, on the left handside, which has the best view of the city (Number 8 in Palmares Plan). Turning right in *Génova Street* (F in Palmares Plan), then left in *Toledo Road* (G in Palmares Plan) and then again right in *Kentenich Street* (H in Palmares Plan), it is possible to see the barbed wire

marking the perimeter of the gated community. The barbed wire extended into *Gibraltar Street* (I in Palmares Plan) and divided the second stage, which is made up of 21 blocks of houses, from the third stage since the latter were not included as part of Palmares by the homeowners’ association in 2003, as already explained.

Taking *Génova Street* and then turning right again, one comes to *Palmas de Mallorca Boulevard* (D in Palmares Plan), with its palm trees, a reference to the name of the neighbourhood (Figure 5.18). The palm tree was chosen to give a symbolic image to the neighbourhood and also for its adaptability to be replanted, as mentioned by Ruperto (Palmares’ developer). Driving about six blocks up through *Palmas de Mallorca Boulevard*, passing the roundabout, and continuing by the same street towards its end, is the clubhouse (Figure 5.19 and Number 9 in Palmares Plan).

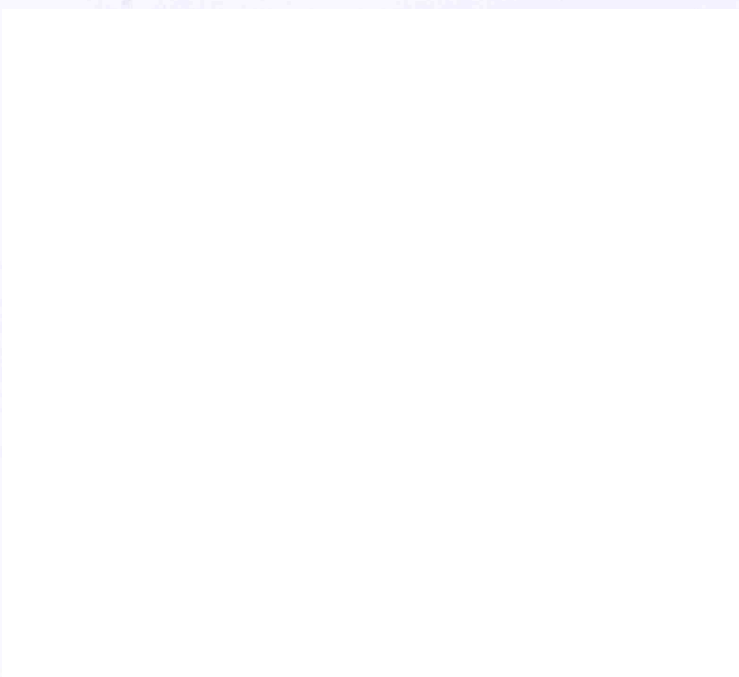
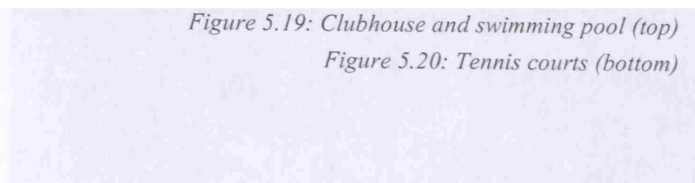


Figure 5.19: Clubhouse and swimming pool (top)

Figure 5.20: Tennis courts (bottom)





This is a building for social events with an open-air swimming pool. There are tennis courts and a football pitch nearby (Figure 5.20 and Number 10 in Palmares Plan).

Taking *Palmas de Mallorca Boulevard* back again and turning right, there is the third entrance to Palmares at the end of the road, leading to “Corredor del Oeste Highway”. Figure 5.21 (Number 11 in Palmares Plan) shows this entrance, which has barriers and a guard-house, as all other accesses to the gated community. This entrance is for the use of residents and guests. There is a sign with the name of the gated community in the brick wall that delineates the perimeter (Figure 5.22).

Figure 5.21: Third entrance to Palmares from the highway (top)

Figure 5.22: Sign outside Palmares (bottom)

By illustrating the internal layout of Palmares and pointing out its main features and amenities, this detailed characterisation gives a sense of how the gated community has developed, its size and housing typology. All these features help to understand what residents look for and value in this type of settlement and how life within the walls is. It also provides some ideas about the type of population of this settlement, which is considered in the next section.

### 5.5. Who are Palmares' residents?

According to the literature (Torres, 1998; Robert, 1998; Svampa, 2001), the residents of Argentinian gated communities are a socially homogeneous group in terms of family structure, interests and socio-economic levels<sup>68</sup>. This section reviews the

<sup>68</sup> Svampa (2001) says they belong to the group of people who work in the service industry in managerial positions.

characteristics of Palmares' residents to examine whether social homogeneity is also their feature.

The most common situation in Palmares is the nuclear family of mother, father and between one to three children, as shown in Table 5.1. There are also "empty-nesters", as well as mono-parental families constituted by only the mother and the children; one member families; and couples with no kids. The average number of members per household was 3.6 at the time of the fieldwork.

**Table 5.1: Family structure in Palmares**

Type of family	%
Nuclear Families	72
Mono-parental Families	16
Empty-nesters	5
One member families	5
Couple with no children	2

Most adult population was in their 30s and 40s, as shown in Table 5.2. There was also a group of adults in their 50s, whose grown-up children were in their 20s. "Empty-nesters" were usually over 60 years old. Since most families had between one and three children, these constituted a large part of the population: 30 percent of the total population of Palmares and 73 percent within non-adults. 15 percent of households were headed by women who were divorced or widows.

**Table 5.2: Age structure of Palmares' residents**

Groups	Age groupings	%
Adults	20-29	14
	30-39	29
	40-49	32
	50-59	18
	60-+	7
	Total Adults	100
Non-Adults	0-12	73
	13-19	27
	Total Non-Adults	100

Before moving to Palmares, most of its residents (77 percent) lived in single houses. All of them formerly lived in MAM: 19 percent in the city centre; 32 percent in traditional upper-middle class neighbourhoods close to the city centre; 42 percent in

other neighbourhoods in MAM and 7 percent in the surrounding neighbourhoods of Palmares.

The arguments concerning the social composition of gated communities' residents in general were discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 as one of the features for defining this type of residential settlement. Social composition refers mainly to the residents' socio-economic level. This research proposed to analyse it according to four variables: income, education level, consumption and type of housing. However, it was not possible to obtain data about incomes, as explained in Chapter 4, since this was considered confidential. Therefore, occupation was chosen to replace the income variable. Within the interviewed households, 56 percent of adults above 25 years old had university education<sup>69</sup>. This represents a high figure when compared to that for the whole municipality of Godoy Cruz, which was 25 percent in 2001 (DEIE). Another 26 percent of Palmares' residents also attended university, but did not complete their degrees.

Ninety percent of the working population were in the private sector. The main occupations for men were as follows: 25 percent owned small or medium companies or retail outlets; 22 percent were independent professionals who had their own offices (solicitors and accountants); 18 percent were managers or company directors; 16 percent were owners of large companies or retail outlets; 16 percent were professionals in non-managerial positions employed by private companies and 3 percent were magistrates. Sixteen percent of women were professionals working in private companies; 13 percent were professionals working in the public sector, mainly state schools and universities. Ten percent of women worked as independent professionals (such as graphic designers, architects, solicitors and accountants); 8 percent were property owners; with another 8 percent owners (or partners) of large companies and 8 percent owned medium-sized companies. 5 percent were magistrates. Finally, 32 percent of women did not have a remunerated job.

The third variable examined was consumption. This was determined by the number of cars in the household and observed during the interviews. All families had one or

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<sup>69</sup> In Argentina undergraduate studies consist of 5 to 6 years of university education.

more cars: 64 percent of the interviewed families had two cars; 28 percent had one car; and 8 percent had three cars. In addition, the fourtracks (Figure 5.23) appeared as a distinctive vehicle that was not frequently seen in the “open city”, but was found in gated communities. This vehicle is a small jeep mainly used for children and teenagers’ recreation and had created some problems within the gated community<sup>70</sup>. Ten percent of the interviewed families had one (or more) fourtrack, mainly for their children’s use.

The several visits to Palmares during the fieldwork provided enough opportunities to carefully observe the houses in the gated community. Following the housing typology elaborated for this research and presented in Appendix B (Table B.4), houses in Palmares were either Type 1 or 2, with more of the latter. According to the

typology, Type 2 houses were medium-sized and comprised: kitchen, living-room and dinning-room or studio, two or three bedrooms (one of them en-suite), and two bathrooms. In addition, these houses had garden and garage. They occupied less than two plots and were built with one or two storeys with good quality materials. Most of these houses were individually designed.

There was only a handful Type 1 houses in the first stage of Palmares, but more in the second stage. They were large houses and occupied two or more plots. They had a large kitchen, living-room, dinning-room, studio, three or more bedrooms (at least one of them en-suite), two or more bathrooms, a games’ room and had been individually designed. In addition, they had a large garden, a service area, a double garage and a swimming pool. They were built with one or two storeys with top



*Figure 5.23: Fourtracks*

<sup>70</sup> See socialisation practice, Chapter 8.

quality materials and were usually in the best locations as far as views and accessibility were concerned. The largest Type 1 houses were owned by “new rich” families, who had experienced upward social mobility and were mainly owners of medium and large-sized retail outlets and companies.

The variables analysed in relation to the socio-economic level of Palmares’ residents show there are some differences amongst them. Nevertheless, when these differences are analysed all together, they are less evident. Sometimes Types 1 and 2 houses overlap because there are houses occupying less than two plots, but with a swimming pool, or Type 2 houses with double garage. Fourtracks are considered luxurious possessions, however, half of the families who owned these items, lived in Type 2 houses and not Type 1. Education levels also show similarities since most of them had attended university. Palmares’ residents appeared more as a homogeneous than heterogeneous social group. This is reinforced when compared with the outside local neighbourhoods, as shown later in this chapter.

Considering the opinions analysed in this section, and taking into account the variables discussed at the beginning of this section (occupation, age, family structure and, especially, housing type), this thesis considers Palmares’ population as a homogeneous social group since similarities are more relevant than dissimilarities. This is even clearer when Palmares’ residents are contrasted with the outside local communities. The next section considers the local areas outside the gated community and their residents.

## **5.6. The surroundings of Palmares**

The examination of the relationship between gated communities and urban social group segregation requires that not only the group that segregates itself (i.e. gated communities’ residents) be considered, but also the social groups from which the former group segregates. This section describes the four neighbourhoods outside Palmares and their residents. It is divided into two sub-sections: 5.6.1 which explores the neighbourhoods outside Palmares and 5.6.2 which considers their residents.

### 5.6.1. The outside neighbourhoods

The research considered four neighbourhoods located outside Palmares. These are: “Urundel”, “Obras Sanitarias”, “Fuchs” and “Altos de la Puntilla” and are all on the northern side of Palmares, as shown in Figure 5.2<sup>71</sup>.

“Altos de la Puntilla” is a line of houses next to the northern border of Palmares, also known locally as *“the partition wall of Palmares”*. It is a group of 31 houses built at the same time as the first stage of Palmares and by the same developing company (Figures 5.24 and 5.25). They are two-storied houses, considerably smaller than Palmares’ houses, with a tiny courtyard. They are considered as Type 2 houses, according to the typology in Appendix B.

During Palmares’ construction two residents of “Altos de la Puntilla” enlarged their courtyards by each buying a plot in Palmares located at the back of their houses<sup>72</sup>. Later, more residents tried to do the

Figures 5.24 and 5.25: “Altos de la Puntilla”

<sup>71</sup> Although some “insiders” mentioned “La Estanzuela” when talking about the surroundings, this settlement was not considered in the research because of several reasons that make it a very peculiar settlement: Firstly, it is located on the other side of the “Corredor del Oeste Highway”, which might be considered as a barrier for encouraging social interactions between “insiders” and the residents of this neighbourhood. Secondly, this settlement has a negative connotation within the Mendocinean society because there have been many social problems, particularly related to criminal activities. Finally, it is a settlement with 1,700 single-housing units and due to its size and its location it is fairly self-contained in relation to the provision of infrastructure, with schools, police stations, a public health centre and shops (see Roitman, 1998).

<sup>72</sup> One of these two residents was interviewed. However, this family was considered as Palmares’ residents in the research as its members defined themselves as such. They entered their house only on Palmares’ side and did not have any relation with the neighbours from “Altos de la Puntilla”.



same, but people from Palmares opposed it saying that this would create security problems to the gated community<sup>73</sup>. The fact that it could be possible for a resident of “Altos de la Puntilla” to buy a plot in Palmares shows that there were social and economic similarities between Palmares and this neighbourhood. They both had Type 2 houses, although plots in Palmares are larger. However, while these two families who had plots in both Palmares and “Altos de la Puntilla” could afford to pay maintenance fees and services in Palmares, this was not the case for most “Altos de la Puntilla”’s residents.

There was no formal<sup>74</sup> residents’ association in this neighbourhood at the time of the research. However, some residents had gathered to discuss issues relating to the neighbourhood, such as disturbing noises. According to its residents, “Altos de la Puntilla” had benefited from having Palmares at their back. These benefits included the provision of security and more services and improvements in the area. In relation to security, Lorna (30-year-old housewife, “Altos de la Puntilla” resident) said: “My

*courtyard is facing Palmares and that makes me feel secure and also some people get confused and think that the security guards are also for us”. For Armando (48-year-old civil engineer from “Altos de la Puntilla”), “the area has more character now with Palmares and shops and retail outlets are more important... all the Panamericana area is full of shops... This is of great benefit for us”.*

“Obras Sanitarias” is a housing scheme with about 70 units

Figure 5.26 and 5.27: “Obras Sanitarias”

<sup>73</sup> Security staff mentioned it as a weakness of the gated community as far as security is concerned.

<sup>74</sup> Formal refers in this thesis to a residents’ association formally constituted and registered to act legally.

(Figures 5.26 and 5.27) located in the north-west side of Palmares. It was built in the 1980s for the workers of “Obras Sanitarias Mendoza”, a former state company that provides and controls Mendoza’s water. The houses were Type 3: one-storey small houses of similar designs, each in a small plot, and regular quality materials. Some were not completely finished. They could have a single garage and a small garden at the back. The only community infrastructure in the neighbourhood was a primary state school located next to Palmares. There was a residents’ association which worked on neighbourhood improvement issues, such as the paving of the streets. It had also dealt with some problems related to the construction of Palmares: such as disturbing noises in the clubhouse of Palmares, which is located next to this neighbourhood, the lack of water and closure of the streets<sup>75</sup>.

To some residents of “Obras Sanitarias” the neighbourhood had not changed with the construction of Palmares. Conversely, others recognised there had been some changes, such as *“fewer robberies and more security and an improvement of the houses façades to make them look similar to other houses”*, as mentioned by Mónica (47-year-old headteacher from “Obras Sanitarias”). Cristóbal (65-year-old retired employee, “Obras Sanitarias” resident) also said: *“Our neighbourhood benefited from Palmares because if it wouldn’t be there, we would have hills and overgrown weeds”*.

“Fuchs” (Figures 5.28 and 5.29) is in the north-eastern side of Palmares and was built in two stages during the 1970s and 1980s. The first stage was targeted at

Figures 5.28 and 5.29: “Fuchs”

<sup>75</sup> See Chapter 7, Practice 2.



providing housing for the workers of a trade union and consisted of 249 units. The second stage was larger, comprising 580 units. It was built as a housing estate funded by the government (Roitman, 1998). Both stages had similar Type 3 houses: consisting of small one- or two-storeys houses in small plots, of good or regular quality materials. A number had been refurbished or improved, with better quality materials. They had a single garage and a small courtyard.

At the time of the research, the social facilities in this neighbourhood consisted of a run-down square opposite Palmares, a state medical centre, a police station and a primary state school. There was a residents' association and its main tasks had been issues of physical infrastructure, sewage and gas supply, and street pavements. As mentioned by Rosa (70-year-old housewife from "Fuchs"), the vice-president of the association: *"We have done everything; the government has done nothing for the neighbourhood"*.

The interviewed "Fuchs" residents agreed that the construction of Palmares increased property values in their neighbourhood. But they also complained that *"they cut the hills to build Palmares and took away all that natural beauty of the area"* (Gema, 58-year-old shopkeeper, "Fuchs"'s resident); and *"our lives changed because this was an isolated place where we could enjoy silence and peace and now we have an acoustic trauma"* (Leopoldo, 62-year-old retired military from "Fuchs"). For Rosa one of the main disadvantages and most important changes in having Palmares nearby was *"the high circulation of vehicles"*.

"Urundel" is an informal settlement located in a very uneven piece of land with small hills in the northern side of Palmares. There were two clearly different sections. One that had about 30 houses built by means of self-help over the last 20 years, without any help from the state or NGOs. The second section was more precarious with Type 4 houses, fragile structures built with very poor materials. This section was settled during the 1990s. There were about 160 houses in total (Figures 5.30 and 5.31). Most residents did not hold land titles.

There was a residents' association and the only community infrastructure was a room, where the association run a weekly soup kitchen. In addition, during 2002 and

2003, the association tried for the neighbourhood to be officially recognised by the government. As the vice-president of the residents' association explained: *"We're struggling to be included on the map, as a neighbourhood"* (Felisa, 29-year-old housewife from "Urundel"). "Urundel"'s residents said that their neighbourhood had not changed as a consequence of the construction of Palmares: *"The neighbourhood has changed, but not because of Palmares. We benefited from them because it's a nice neighbourhood and they won't harm us even if they're ashamed of us"* (Felisa).

The different types of houses in these four neighbourhoods show the diversity of the social groups living outside Palmares. The housing type acts as the main distinctive element to establish their socio-economic levels and enable comparison between them and between them and Palmares. This is further elaborated in the next sub-section when describing the features of "outsiders".

### 5.6.2. The outside local residents

The populations of the four outside neighbourhoods considered in this research are very different. The characterisation of these outside residents was intended to be done according to four variables: income, education level, consumption and type of houses. The last one was already examined in the previous sub-section. It was difficult to get information about the other three variables, since the "outsiders" wanted to talk about Palmares, but not much about themselves. Similar to what

Figures 5.30 and 5.31: "Urundel"

happened in the case of the gated community's residents, it was not possible to ask about their salaries, but about their occupations and education levels. Consumption was not easy to identify. Cars were the most evident element to be recognised in this respect. Age and family structure were also considered for this characterisation.

"Altos de la Puntilla"'s residents were mostly freelance professionals or working for private companies. Most of them had completed a university degree. They had been living in the neighbourhood for between two and six years. They had one, and exceptionally two cars. Most of the houses were occupied by nuclear families composed of a couple with one or two children. There were also couples without children and mono-parental families. Residents were in their 30s or 40s. There was not much contact amongst these neighbours.

Their "Obras Sanitarias" neighbours had been living there for more than 10 years, but there was not much contact amongst themselves. There were nuclear families with teenage children or "empty-nesters". Some residents were already retired and others were state employees, such as teachers. Only few had attended university. Some had one car, small or medium-sized and not new models; some had none.

There were two distinctive groups of residents in "Fuchs". Many of them had lived there since the time the neighbourhood was built 30 years ago. As Leopoldo explained: *"This is a neighbourhood of old people. When we came, we were young couples and now we're in our 60s and most of us have grandchildren and are retired"*. Most of them had not attended university and had worked as employees in state or private companies and were already retired. Most people in this group were "empty-nesters". There was a second group of residents who were younger, in their late 20s and 30s. Some of these had children. They had finished university and worked as teachers in private schools or were employed by private companies. They had lived in the neighbourhood for about three years. Most of them had a small car.

Finally, “Urundel”’s residents were a diverse group in terms of ages and family structure. Some had been there for more than 15 years and were “empty-nesters”. Others were young families with children (usually more than three) who had been there for about six years. Most of them had not completed schooling (primary or secondary) and had low-skilled and low-paid jobs (builders, cleaners and home-helps). They had very old cars or no cars. Lucas (68-year-old retired employee from “Urundel”), commented: *“Our neighbourhood is all of working class people. Then, there is “Obras Sanitarias”, whose people are a bit higher [in the social structure] than us... [Finally] there is a huge difference between this neighbourhood and Palmares”*.

These four neighbourhoods are quite diverse in terms of age, family structure, education and socio-economic level of their residents, the latter being considered according to occupation, consumption and type of house. In the case of “Fuchs” and “Obras Sanitarias”, built during the 1970s and 1980s, their population at the time of the fieldwork was mainly over 50 years old. In contrast, “Urundel” and “Altos de la Puntilla” were “younger” neighbourhoods with a younger population. Regarding family structure, all neighbourhoods were mixed with a mixture of nuclear families and “empty-nesters”. In that sense, they could be considered as similar. However, when analysing socio-economic level, differences become more important. “Urundel” is a low-income neighbourhood, while the other three are middle-class. But there are also differences between “Altos de la Puntilla” and “Fuchs” and “Obras Sanitarias”, the latter two being the most similar neighbourhoods with similar type of houses, similar cars, and similar characteristics for their residents regarding jobs and education level. In terms of jobs, education, housing and consumption behaviour, “Altos de la Puntilla”’s could be considered in a higher position in the social structure than “Fuchs” and “Obras Sanitarias” residents because their houses and cars were better, they had a higher educational level and better jobs.

This section has examined the surroundings of Palmares in relation to the physical layout and origin of each neighbourhood and the social composition of their populations. They are all very diverse, with the most similar neighbourhoods being “Fuchs” and “Obras Sanitarias”. The characterisation of each neighbourhood in

terms of housing, education level, family structure, age, consumption and occupation becomes relevant when analysing social interactions between different social groups, and especially between “insiders” and “outsiders”. For example, it might be that since “Altos de la Puntilla” has more similarities with Palmares than any other surrounding neighbourhood and the relationships between their residents might be stronger. Also, despite their differences, there were similar concerns, such as urban insecurity and how to tackle it, as next chapters show. The next section considers security as one of the main features of Palmares.

### **5.7. Provision of security in Palmares**

Continuing with the analysis of the features of this gated community, this section examines its security service. By the end of the 1990s, in the context of the rise in urban crime and increasing fear of crime, Palmares became an attractive neighbourhood because of its security devices, adding a new valuable element to its other advantages. Saúl (44-year-old retail outlet owner, living in Palmares) expressed: *“We are satisfied with Palmares mainly because of the security, and also for the tranquillity you have; houses don’t have fences, alarms, or keys”*.

The observation of access procedures in several gated communities in MAM reveals that Palmares has one of the most strictly controlled accesses, and more sophisticated security devices. A chief and 35 guards, working in shifts, formed the security staff. At the time of the research, there were 13 guards during daytime and 17 at night. Guards did not carry arms in the daytime, whilst 30 percent of them did so at night. There were different watching positions: some were based at the three entrances to Palmares, others controlled the settlement walking around, while some did it by motorbike. There were also some guards with weapons and dogs who took care of the perimeter at night. There were alarms in some sections of the perimeter and security cameras with CCTV in different locations of the gated community, especially at the entrances.

Security personnel in Palmares were young men between 22 to 35 years-old. Most of them had not finished secondary school. They did not usually receive a special training to work as security guards, except for those who carried weapons. They did

12-hour shifts and worked six days a week. Their salaries were low. A private company provided the security service in Palmares and hired all security personnel. Palmares had a security chief in his late 50s who was a former government intelligence agent and had a background in criminology.

Although some residents would like to have more strict security controls, most of them were satisfied with the service. They knew that strangers would not be allowed access to the neighbourhood and this was the reason for not taking security measures in their homes. During the day, most houses front doors were unlocked as were the vehicles. Most houses did not have alarms, in contrast with practice in the “open city”. Most people even mentioned that they did not carry their house keys with them because doors were always unlocked. Residents took more precautions when there was a house under construction close to their house, since this implied outside people working there: *“Lately, we’ve been locking the doors because there’re houses under construction on the two sides next to my house and everything is so crazy. We lock just in case, because of the builders or something... also this is influenced by the suspicion aroused from what you see in the news...”* (Fernando, 20-year-old student). Talking about habit changes due to having more security Fernando added: *“You get used to sleeping with the windows open, and this is so nice! You get used to the quietness... to leave vehicles unlocked, to leave a door open and you know everything is fine, that a crazy guy with a gun isn’t going to enter and say: ‘Freeze!’... You get so used to these things... and you don’t want to change this for anything”*.

Juan (46-year-old medical doctor also from Palmares) explained that his family did not take security measures at home: *“I leave the door open, the window open, and the car in the street unlocked. Furthermore I’ve gone to San Luis [a bordering province] and I’ve gone out to the street with all the luggage, I’ve loaded the car and I’ve left the house without closing the front door... leaving the front door totally open twice! The neighbours have come with the guards, have checked the house to see that there is no one and then close the front door”*. Alvaro (56-year-old private company manager) confirmed: *“In this house, and I think in most houses in Palmares, doors aren’t usually locked... but if we go on holidays or out for few days, we lock the doors and we warn the guards that we won’t be at home... We tell them [the guards]*

*if there is somebody, like the home-help, authorised to enter the house... We don't lock the cars and we leave the keys inside them most of the times... ”.*

These narratives show that residents felt safe at home due to the strictly controlled access and the security devices used in Palmares and had no worry about security measures inside the residential scheme. Nevertheless, some residents took some security precautions like locking front doors at night and locking cars. Celina (43-year-old architect) commented on her habit: *“I enter the car into the garage and lock it... I leave all the ground floor of the house locked and all the first floor open if I'm going out for a while”*. A few interviewed residents had installed alarms in their houses, but these were mostly off: *“We usually lock the doors... there is an alarm that is always off... We brought it from our former house... and we have never set it on...”* (José, 39-year-old private company employee).

Residents mentioned that although the gated community had largely increased over the past years, and would continue doing so since there were still plots available and houses under construction, the security staff had not changed. They thought the security staff should be increased. Moreover, some residents mentioned being lately more careful and taking more security measures because of the large number of non-residents that daily entered the residential settlement, as mentioned by Fernando earlier. Gretel (49-year-old property owner) moved to Palmares in 1996, for her: *“Security was at the beginning nearly the same as now with very few houses, therefore it worked great; when the neighbourhood started increasing its size, more people were coming, larger number of workers were entering, more services and goods providers, and so on...and we started taking measures that we didn't before, like locking the front door...”*.

In addition to the differences to the gated community when it was smaller, residents constantly marked the differences between living inside and outside the gated community as far as security was concerned: *“The front door is never locked in my house. We sleep with the door unlocked. I sleep calm... but if I'd be in the “Quinta Sección”<sup>76</sup>, I'd have to put iron fences, electricity, alarms and thousand of things to*

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<sup>76</sup> “Quinta Sección” or “La Quinta” is an upper-class residential area close to the city centre.

*be able to leave my house alone for only one night... The feeling of security is a feeling that one values a lot... I don't know if it [Palmares] is completely safe... but you have the feeling [of being safe]" (Saúl). Sara (48-year-old travel agency owner) commented on her experience of living in Palmares and compared it with her former house in a residential open area: "It isn't like it was before. I'm not checking if I've locked the car, if the boot is closed, if the door is locked. I spent six months living here with a door that didn't have a key and I didn't realise it".*

Talking about the differences between living in an "open neighbourhood" and a gated community, Gastón (36-year-old shop owner) insisted: *"I live more relaxed. I see that my son can play in the street without worries, and I didn't allow him to stay in the street where we lived before... To see that my son can play outside has changed my life 100 percent... Furthermore, in the old house I would arrive to my house and I would look around to check that there was nobody waiting to rob me, when opening the garage to enter the car".* José also felt the same sense of security: *"I don't have to be worried about who is outside in the street, of who is ringing the bell, who is knocking at the door, if the car is locked or unlocked... and we're all more comfortable".* Camila (40-year-old dentist) said that her life had changed since she lived in Palmares: *"In the past years, I closed the blinds, I entered the car in the garage and I lived in fear and now not anymore... Yes, my life has changed a lot".* Carla (45-year-old large company owner) expressed herself thus: *"I'm happy because I can have more open space. My former house was the same as this one in Palmares, but the wall surrounding the house outside here is only 60 centimetres high because I don't need more protection, and over there it had five metres!".* Alvaro added: *"Ambulant sellers... they drive you crazy if you live in the city centre or in the "Quinta Sección" or wherever you live... they're always ringing the bell to ask you for some help, to sell you flowers, or to sell you whatever and this doesn't happen here...".*

Despite the security measures, there had been some robberies inside Palmares. Most of the stolen possessions were bicycles and tools used for house constructions. However, there were two robberies in July 2007 that appeared in the most important



newspaper from Mendoza<sup>77</sup>. Clara (48-year-old university teacher) confirmed that there had been robberies in some of the houses located in the perimeter. Gregorio, a teenage resident, talked of his experience: *"I left the bike in the communal garden for a while and I went to go around in a fourtrack with a friend and when I came back the bike wasn't there anymore"*. Residents never blamed other residents for robberies, but builders or even the security guards. Esteban (31-year-old accountant) said: *"My dog was stolen... I don't like that the guards are with a dog that isn't theirs. One becomes the dog's friend, and then the dog knows that person and he can take the dog with him"*.

Residents were nearly obsessed with security. Many residents would like to reinforce and improve some of the security devices in use. They would like to change some of the barbed wire fences for brick walls (Carina, 39-year-old housewife), put more alarms in some sections of the perimeter where there were no alarms (Celina), replace the barriers at the entrances for iron gates, and *"increase the number of guards watching the perimeter of the gated community"* (Miguel, 39-year-old large company owner). *"If groups of people come from outside and want to enter they can easily break these barriers"* (Carina) and *"It's more difficult to climb an iron gate or a wall than trespass a barrier"* (Celina). Samuel (44-year-old solicitor), a member of the homeowners' association, said: *"We could improve the security. We have good security today, but we think that more is necessary... not because something has happened, but to avoid that something will happen"*.

Security guards are central to the security service provided. Most residents were satisfied with their performance. However, some residents mentioned feeling sometimes *"over watched"*. This was one of the issues that had required some adaptation according to residents. For Alejandra (46-year-old teacher): *"It's like if you're very controlled"*. Esteban added: *"The security staff know all about your life... know your schedule... they're watching you the whole day... they check when I arrive, when I leave, they ask: 'Are you going on holidays?' ... They know if you're alone...if my mum is in or not... if I have siblings or not... They know all"*.

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<sup>77</sup> During the winter holidays of July 2007, there were two robberies in Palmares. The thieves managed to avoid all security devices. The losses were considerable and the media pointed out that even this gated community seemed to be vulnerable to crime (Los Andes on line, [www.losandes.com.ar](http://www.losandes.com.ar), 19/07/07).

However, Graciela (32-year-old housewife) had a different view: *“There are people who say: ‘All neighbours and all guards know when you enter, when you go out, who lives in the house, who comes to your house’. And that doesn’t affect me because I don’t have anything to hide... that somebody, or a guard, knows how I behave and suddenly one day he sees something odd in my house and because of that he would ring the bell and ask me ‘Is everything all right?’ ... This is a benefit for me... I don’t care, I don’t refuse saying who comes to visit me or where I go because there is nothing wrong”*.

Clara also mentioned some worries regarding the security service: *“The security has been worrying me lately because you don’t know the guards any more. There are some guards that you know and you always see and recognise, and there are others that I don’t even know. There is an issue of high rotation and I don’t know if it’s because they’re on low pay or they change shifts... but there aren’t always the same people and that makes me feel worried”*.

Security is one of the main features of gated communities and therefore it is part of its definition. This section shows that the provision of security is a significant topic for Palmares’ residents. It was the most valued service in the settlement and most residents were satisfied with it, although some considered it was not perfect and could be improved. Another feature of gated communities was their private government, which is analysed in the next section.

### **5.8. Palmares’ homeowners association and internal codes**

In addition to the social homogeneity of their residents and the provision of security, gated communities are also characterised by having residents’ associations and internal codes of behaviour. This section reviews these two attributes for the case of Palmares, focusing on the organisation and tasks of the homeowners’ association in Sub-section 5.8.1 and the description of the rules that regulate life within Palmares’ walls in Sub-section 5.8.2. The section reflects on the increasing process of privatisation related to the development of gated communities that leads to the creation of a private government with its own private rules.

### **5.8.1. A.Pro.CUP.: “Asociación de Propietarios del Conjunto Urbano Palmares”**

A.Pro.CUP. (“Asociación de Propietarios del Conjunto Urbano Palmares”– Homeowners’ Association of Palmares Urban Scheme) acts as a private government performing executive, legislative and judicial functions. It has an executive function which is played by the board of A.Pro.CUP. and the manager of Palmares. The legislative authority is also in the hands of the board which writes the internal codes that regulate the neighbourhood and are approved by the General Assembly of residents. The judicial function is undertaken by the board of discipline, which applies fines, as explained in this sub-section.

The origin of A.Pro.CUP. can be found in the initial settlement’s regulations. The company that developed Palmares was expected to be responsible for the administration of the neighbourhood for 20 years. However, around 2000-2001, a group of residents who was not satisfied with how this company was managing the gated community requested the constitution of a homeowners’ association<sup>78</sup> to take over its management. In 2002, A.Pro.CUP. was created. Gretel, who participated in A.Pro.CUP., explained: *“In the past, we [residents] didn’t have a voice nor a vote; decisions were taken by the person who built the neighbourhood... and we could see many mistakes”*. Most residents, especially those who had experienced the management by both the building company and A.Pro.CUP., considered that the change had been positive. For Camila, *“It’s much better. Everything is tidier, accounts [finances] are clearer, there is more security, common spaces are well cared, but there is still a lot to be done”*. As mentioned by Felipe (40-year-old lawyer), the president of A.Pro.CUP., the main tasks of the association were: *“Maintenance and improvement of the neighbourhood; the possibility of its improvement because it has many deficiencies... many things that were promised are still not done... like intercoms... and security measures”*. According to him, before A.Pro.CUP. was created, the number of households that did not pay the maintenance fees was very high. The association reinforced the importance of paying to get better services and in 2003, 85 percent of the residents paid their fees.

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<sup>78</sup> A.Pro.CUP. is a homeowners’ association. Tenants cannot participate in the management of the settlement.

The Board of A.Pro.CUP. is constituted by seven members: president, secretary, treasurer, two directors and two auditors (A.Pro.CUP.; a). The Board is elected by the General Assembly of homeowners. Each household, excluding tenants, has one vote in the assembly. In addition to the board, there are six committees in which residents can participate: security, maintenance, gardening, social and cultural events, sports and youth. One of the first measures of A.Pro.CUP. in 2002 was to hire a manager for Palmares to deal with everyday events in the neighbourhood. Later, the association outsourced services supplied within Palmares to four companies. A security company was in charge of the security of the settlement providing high-tech security devices and trained staff. Another company took care of green areas and maintenance duties; a legal firm dealt with cases of residents who did not pay their monthly fees; and an architect office dealt with building regulations.

At the time of the research, A.Pro.CUP. edited a monthly four-page bulletin to inform residents on different issues and events held in the settlement and giving information on its financial situation. It also worked as a link between residents and the “outside society” or the local government, for discussion of issues concerning the whole gated community. The issue of by-laws related to the legal status of Palmares, as explained in Section 5.1, was the main activity in which the association was involved during 2002. Another important task of A.Pro.CUP. in 2003 was the revision of the code of behaviour that regulated everyday life within the premises of Palmares and established fines, when rules were not respected. Alvaro commented in 2003: *“I’m in a committee to write a sort of internal code of behaviour. We’re trying to complement the rules that exist in any society”*.

Whilst this private government was democratic and its members were elected by their peers, the rules and punishments were not always considered democratic and some residents did not agree with them. This created some internal problems. Most residents did not sit on the committees and only attended annual assemblies: *“I participate, I go to the meetings, I give my opinion, and I’ve attended all assemblies. But I don’t participate in committees”* (Miguel). Some residents argued that this was due to lack of time for such things: *“Nowadays everybody wants to spend free time*

*with his/her family and not doing anything else” (Graciela). It is also significant that more men attended assemblies than women. Carina said: “Victor [her husband] attends the meetings. I can’t do it because of the kids”. Moreover, Gretel did not want to continue in the association “because other residents have to participate and put some effort as well; it’s very exhausting from all points of views: in terms of time and also because you have to face some issues that you have to tell to your neighbour or decisions that you have to take and there are many frictions with neighbours”.*

There were significant gender differences in relation to the composition of the board of members of A.Pro.CUP<sup>79</sup>. Most members were men and there had never been a female president. As Carina already explained, many women felt they should concentrate on their reproductive role taking care of the house and the children, and decision-making regarding the management of Palmares should be a job for their husbands who have more time for this. However, it is worth noting that this does not mean that women did not participate in community activities. They participated in the committees and there was a group of women that organised social and cultural activities, including Christmas celebrations and charity work.

This section has explained the role that the homeowners’ association has in everyday life within Palmares. Although the outside neighbourhoods also have residents’ associations that work on the collective interests of their settlements, mainly to improve physical conditions and solve problems, the role of A.Pro.CUP. is broader and more formal. The association has a key role in the life of the gated community. It establishes what it is allowed or what is not in Palmares. In addition, it had a significant role to play in relation to the recognition of the legal status of the gated community. Its relevance seems to indicate that having this own government is a step further in the process of privatisation, which not only includes the use of public spaces, but also the existence of particular duties, like enforcing the code of conduct, as explained in the next sub-section.

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<sup>79</sup> See Appendix A for the composition of interviewees groups.

### **5.8.2. Internal Codes of Building and Behaviour**

Originally, the company that developed Palmares wrote two internal codes: one related to the house construction and the second one about residents and guests' behaviour inside Palmares' premises. When A.Pro.CUP. took over the administration of Palmares, this association ratified these codes with minor amendments.

The code of building established that access was restricted and this applied to workers; land could only be used to build single-family houses, prohibited the installation of commercial and industrial activities within the premises as well as offices or non-residential activities ("Presidente", a & b). There were rules to be followed concerning building materials, heights of roofs and walls, and size of gardens. Basic plots could not be subdivided, unless to be added to another single plot. This code also ruled the conduct and activities of builders: entrance access and control, dress code (i.e., no shorts, no naked upper body), places to stay as well as working hours. Workers had to be registered to allow security control and needed to carry their identification cards to be granted access to the gated community. Workers could not consume alcoholic drinks on the premises. An inventory listing all tools was elaborated to control tools going inside and outside the gated community (A.Pro.CUP., b). Postmen or couriers did not have access to the neighbourhood. The post was left everyday at the house-guard in the main entrance of Palmares and later delivered by security guards. The code of building did not get major amendments when A.Pro.CUP. took over the management of the gated community.

In 2003 major changes were introduced to the code of behaviour since residents felt it was necessary to improve living conditions in Palmares. The main modifications were the implementation of fines and the creation of a three-member Board of Discipline<sup>80</sup> to judge cases of misbehaviour and give sanctions accordingly. It established sanctions such as fines for cases of misbehaviour, prohibition to use common amenities or access denial to non-residents when common areas had been damaged or a person had infringed the regulations. The fines might consist of a large

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<sup>80</sup> It is interesting that one of the topics discussed in relation to this Board of Discipline was its composition. Age was one of the criteria and it was established that members of this board had to be older than 50 years-old. Residents younger than that complained about this.

sum of money according to the seriousness of the offence. Extreme cases (i.e., no payment of maintenance fees and car accidents) were taken to the regular civil law courts. The code also mentioned that in case of problems between neighbours, the tribunal of discipline would be the third party to find a solution to the problem (A.Pro.CUP., 2003).

The code of behaviour also regulated on access to and security measures in the gated community. In relation to vehicular circulation, it stated that according to municipal ordinance 4.879/02 (explained in Section 5.1), circulation is regulated by provincial authorities within the premises, and therefore all its regulations had to be followed. In case of children or teenagers driving vehicles, security staff would have the right to confiscate vehicles' keys. The maximum speed allowed was 30 kilometres per hour. Concerning pets, residents were allowed to have only one dog per household and dog waste left in public spaces would mean a fine for its owner. All pets had to be registered in the manager's registry and all vaccinations were mandatory. Hunting was not allowed, nor were noises and loud music (A.Pro.CUP., 2003).

Prior to its approval, this code was discussed amongst residents and finally approved by the residents' assembly. However, there was a discussion within Palmares' residents about the necessity to have a code of behaviour. Some residents found this code redundant since there were other rules (external to the gated community) that could be applied as it would be the case in any "open neighbourhood". Residents in favour of the existence of a code of conduct argued that there were several behavioural problems that needed solutions. Having a code of conduct is another element that indicated the increasing process of privatisation, not only in terms of construction rules, but also regulating how residents should behave and what types of activities were allowed.

The manager of Palmares was also involved in the elaboration of the behaviour code. He explained the need for this code, mentioning some of the everyday problems he had to deal with: *"Problems with dogs, with fourtracks, children that throw stones against windows in new houses, children who damage cars, loud music, and parties*

*everyday*” (Facundo, Palmares’ manager). It is worth noting that these problems were the main issues security guards had to deal with everyday, more than other security problems. Nicanor, the security chief, said: *“Guards are more babysitters than guards”*. In addition to this, security guards often had to contest with problems of authority when they were watching over children. Driving fourtracks was not allowed in the case of children since they did not have a driving licence. Guards were entitled to take the keys of the vehicles in these cases. However, some parents did not respect the guards’ decisions. As Horacio, a security guard, explained: *“We take the keys and give them to the father and the kids swear at us and the parents say ‘it is OK’, but two minutes later, they give the keys back to the children... and we don’t say anything to the child because we’re playing a losing battle”*.

Despite these internal codes of behaviour and construction, the gated community could not be isolated from the rules regulating “open society” because it is part of that society. Even more, in extreme or difficult cases, such as not paying maintenance fees or serious misbehaviour, A.Pro.CUP. relied on the authority of the “ordinary justice” and the local and provincial governments. Therefore, although this section shows the increasing privatisation related to the development of gated communities, this process is limited and the “outside world” still plays an important role in what happens inside the gated community. However, internal regulations are relevant for this thesis since they might influence the social practices performed by gated communities’ residents.

## **5.9. Conclusions**

This chapter presented Palmares, the case study of the research, and its main attributes. It also examined the development of gated communities in the Municipality of Godoy Cruz and how this has been addressed by the local government. The lack of uniform guidelines and legislation on gated communities created a chaotic situation, allowing for discretionary practices and ad-hoc legislation. Local governments oppose gated communities because of their negative impacts, but at the same time favour them since they represent an important source of revenue.



A detailed characterisation of Palmares' layout, size, physical attributes and amenities was given. On the basis of the definition of gated communities used in this thesis, the most important attributes of Palmares have been explained: controlled access and security devices used; social homogeneity of its residents; existence of a residents' association with a significant role to play in everyday life inside the gated community; codes of behaviour and construction that state fines and obligatory maintenance fees and increasing privatisation process.

The thesis considers that the characteristics of the gated community's residents show that homogeneity concerning socio-economic level and labour market positions held. This reinforces the idea that gated communities' residents are a homogeneous social group when compared to the society as a whole. The surroundings of Palmares in terms of the types of housing and their residents were also discussed in this chapter. Contrary to the internal homogeneity, the surrounding local neighbourhoods varied in composition, evidenced mainly by the housing typology.

Life in Palmares is controlled by the building and behaviour codes. Palmares' government performs executive, legislative and judicial functions taking over some of the functions played by the local government. Increasing private governance is illustrated in this case study with the existence of a private government, private rules and private sanctions. Most residents agreed on having this governing body, with extra rules and also sanctions that do not exist in "open neighbourhoods". However, there is a strong relation with local and provincial governments that have the ultimate decision in issues concerning the gated community and another party, such as another neighbourhood, an individual resident or a visitor, as illustrated in reference to the legal status of Palmares and the role of the municipality in protecting its status as a gated community through by-laws.

This chapter analysed the objective elements that characterise gated communities. The analysis of these attributes is essential to the thesis since its theoretical proposition sustains that the gated communities' attributes help the understanding of the process of urban social group segregation by the residents of these closed settlements. The next chapter examines the subjective elements or viewpoints about living in gated communities.

## **CHAPTER 6:**

### **GATED COMMUNITIES AND SOCIAL DIFFERENCES: ANALYSIS OF VIEWPOINTS**

#### **Introduction**

The decision to move to a gated community might trigger personal and collective reflexions about its meaning, in a context of only a few citizens being able to choose this type of residential settlement due to its high economic costs. Discussions about social differences, the image of gated communities and discrimination might appear as a consequence of the development of these settlements.

The chapter examines viewpoints, understood as the expression of values, feelings, attitudes and knowledge held by social actors, about living in gated communities and about social differences. These viewpoints are relevant for the thesis because they help the understanding of the process of urban social group segregation by the gated communities' residents and also of the particular viewpoints related to the "neighbouring social practices". Opinions, values, attitudes and knowledge might provide an insight into the reasons for the development of these settlements and their increase in number.

This chapter addresses viewpoints about living in Palmares and also about gated communities in general, according to "insiders", "outsiders" and "other sources"<sup>81</sup>. These viewpoints are the "subjective elements", which are the second group of elements that the thesis examines, the features of Palmares as a gated community and the "neighbouring social practices" carried out by its residents being the other two groups of elements, as mentioned in the Introduction to the thesis. The viewpoints analysed in this chapter appear sometimes to be contradictory, ambiguous or confused, but this is part of the nature of how social actors perceive reality. Their viewpoints are not the reality, but how they see it. The research sought to shed light

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<sup>81</sup> This chapter focuses on the viewpoints of "insiders" since they are the main study population. Nevertheless, viewpoints of "outsiders" are also crucial to understand how they perceived gated communities and their residents and therefore they receive considerable attention. "Other sources" includes mainly social actors from the government, developers, researchers and the gated community staff. This is explained in Appendix B (Table B.1).

on understanding these viewpoints. The chapter is divided into two sections. Section 6.1 analyses viewpoints about living in gated communities; while Section 6.2 considers viewpoints about social differences.

### **6.1. Viewpoints about living in gated communities**

Interviewed Palmares' residents mentioned several reasons for living there. These were as follows (in no order of importance): location of Palmares; having more comfort in the new house; opportunity for socialisation; acquiring a higher social status and exclusivity; feeling more protected; investing in a property; living in a residential area where mixed land use is not allowed; and living in a quieter place. Many residents considered that Palmares was a good location because it is not in the city centre, but close to it and the "Corredor del Oeste" highway makes commuting to the centre easy and fast. Most residents formerly lived in small houses or flats and wanted to have more comfort in a larger house, built according to their needs and expectations. Some residents emphasised that living in a gated community, with people with similar interests to them, and probably similar ages and family structure, along with the existence of shared amenities, would facilitate socialisation amongst residents. Also some people thought that the decision to move there could confer on them a higher social status and exclusivity. Most residents manifested the need to feel more protected and therefore choosing to live in a protected place. Property investment was another important reason for buying a house in Palmares. According to some residents, because of its advantages, having a house in this gated community would be a good investment for the future. Some residents who had previously lived in central areas of the city wanted to move to quieter areas and considered the area of Palmares as such because there is less traffic and noise and nicer views of the mountains. Most of these reasons correspond to what the literature mentioned as causes for the development of gated communities, as reviewed in Chapter 2. "Getting more security" and "acquiring a higher social status" are the two reasons discussed in this section. The former was in most cases the first motive for moving to Palmares. The latter usually came up in the interviews as another very frequent reason. This section also addresses viewpoints about the future of gated communities in Mendoza.

### 6.1.1. Gated communities and feelings of being protected

There is a strong link between gated communities and (in)security. The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 showed that this type of residential settlement is considered by their residents as more secure than “open neighbourhoods”, although the evidence presented by the same literature did not show that they offer more security. Chapter 5 examined the security service provided in Palmares and the security routines carried out by its residents. This section addresses the subjective elements of these security habits. They include viewpoints about how they perceived security and why they valued it.

The importance of viewpoints about being secured is expressed by the fact that most citizens living inside and outside Palmares, regardless of their age or gender, justified its creation on the grounds of increasing insecurity in urban areas and the need to feel safer. This view is also shared by the local government, as mentioned in Chapter 5. Most residents interviewed gave security as the first reason for living in that gated community. However, most adults referred to the importance of providing security for their children rather than feeling safe themselves. According to Alfonso (46-year-old engineer from Palmares): *“We, my wife and I, work a lot. We aren’t at home for long hours and our three children, ages from 10 to 15, stay alone for long periods. A woman comes everyday to help in the house. But she leaves around midday. I come back home at 8pm and my wife at 6pm. The kids are alone all afternoon, so we looked for a secure place. We lived in Las Heras before moving here and one of my kids was mugged there. They stole his bike and hit him”*. Manuel (53-year-old account also from Palmares) added: *“The main reason for moving here was our search for security over the last years. I was burgled three times in my former home. We weren’t at home, and luckily we didn’t have to face the thieves! You’ll find that nearly everybody here in Palmares has had a bad experience related to robberies”*.

This is particularly relevant for those who moved to Palmares in the late 1990s and especially since 2000 when crime grew enormously in MAM (see Appendix A), with the result of an increase of fear of crime. Whilst in 1996 27.1 percent of the upper-class population mentioned feeling unsafe in the city, this figure increased to 63.0

percent in 1999 (Bistué *et al.*; 2001)<sup>82</sup>. The relevance of fear of crime was emphasised by Nicanor, the security chief of Palmares, who stated: *"Security is a feeling, not a fact"*.

In this context of fear of crime, Palmares' residents expressed their viewpoints on why they valued security. For Graciela, *"security is paramount... Everything is around that... It isn't only security that thieves aren't going to break into your house, but the security that you're watched over... There are security guards everywhere and if something happens... if my daughter falls off her bike, a guard would help her and I would be called ... Things that are maybe far more than security... If I'm alone and there is a problem, there are people around who would help me... If I shout, a guard would come ..."*. Alfonso mentioned security as the driving force to choose a gated community as a place to live and disregarded status as a motive: *"I don't think that people are here in Palmares to show off, but for security reasons. If the social situation in the country were quieter, there wouldn't be a 'boom' of gated communities"*. When asked about what they liked most about the neighbourhood, Constanza, a teenager, replied: *"I like that it's quiet, which means that there are no robberies"*<sup>83</sup>. Rebeca (16-year-old student, Palmares' resident) compared: *"You feel protected here, this is different from when you live in the city or in ordinary neighbourhoods"*.

Security was the most frequent topic in all conversations about Palmares. Most Palmares' interviewees thought that gated communities were a solution to urban crimes and the rise of insecurity. A few residents, however, believed that gated communities would not be a solution in extreme cases of lootings<sup>84</sup> since they would be the most vulnerable: *"If there is a revolution, the first thing to be attacked would be a gated community"* (Adela, 33-year-old housewife, from Palmares). For Gerardo (22-year-old student, Palmares' resident), *"it's a temporary and limited solution because nobody can live in a gated community without going out of it... Most of*

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<sup>82</sup> See Appendix A, Table A.2.

<sup>83</sup> This might sound contradictory, as in Chapter 5 mention is made of burglaries in Palmares. However, residents did not frequently remark on these events and considered them as insignificant in relation to the situation in the "open city". This also shows the difference between reality and their viewpoints.

<sup>84</sup> One of the consequences of the socio-economic and political crisis at the end of 2001 was the upsurge of lootings and riots. It was believed that gated communities would be a target of these lootings.

*everybody's life is outside... One goes to a restaurant, to a club, ...to see a football match... all outside... It's like home is here in Palmares, but it's connected to other places that aren't in the neighbourhood...".* This opinion shows that Palmares' residents had strong links to the city and needed it for their daily life practices. They may separate themselves from the outside local communities, but they cannot ignore the city and its services.

Viewpoints about urban security in the context of the economic crisis varied. Some residents appreciated the fact that although gated communities could be a private solution or even a *"selfish solution"* just for themselves, it is not a solution for the society as a whole. Carolina (42-year-old graphic designer from Palmares) made the distinction: *"A solution for me? Yes. But it isn't for the rest. I don't think it's the solution to stop crime... but it's for me to be more relaxed... to be able to sleep more relaxed"*. Similarly, Rodrigo (39-year-old private company manager, Palmares' resident) said: *"Gated communities are a solution for me, but not at all the solution to the problem of insecurity... The solution is to try to improve living conditions of the lower classes"*. Celina argued that: *"The solution is a political solution... to educate people first, not to have so many outcasts... The solution isn't a gated community. A gated community is a palliative and I think that due to the strong differences, the ones outside see gated communities with bias... The contact with the frontiers... you have this neighbourhood and next to it you have "La Estanzuela"<sup>85</sup>; the two social extremes coming together... "*.

Many "insiders" remarked that *"the solution would be to have a country with good people in the government... If so, we wouldn't have gated communities. We'll all be equal... but gated communities encourage those who can pay to live here. But all citizens pay taxes to have a good way of living. Then it's unfair that we have to choose to live in a gated community to have a better quality of life if everybody pays taxes..."* (Gretel). This reference to politicians and government staff and their incapacity to solve social problems, such as delinquency and unemployment, was mentioned by most interviewees. Ruperto, the developer of Palmares, also expressed: *"We pay taxes. We're paying for the state to provide security. The state should take*

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<sup>85</sup> "La Estanzuela" is a large social housing estate on the other side of "Corredor del Oeste" Highway, with a negative image. See footnote 71.

*care of the communal garden and green spaces inside the gated community, but those are cared for by the community. Street cleaning that should be done by the municipality is done by a private company; the state is charging taxes, but not providing services".* What Ruperto said also illustrates the opinions about the withdrawal of the state from the security provision and the claim made by some residents and developers that on the one hand they had to hire a private security service, and on the other hand they also had to pay taxes to the local government.

The viewpoints given by "insiders" emphasise the importance of feeling safer inside the gated community in a context of high crime rates and particularly considering that some of these residents were victims of crime. Nevertheless, residents were aware that this safety net was not perfect since they needed to go out from the gated community to carry out their daily practices. In addition, these settlements were perceived as a foremost target for lootings. Gated communities were considered a solution for only a few citizens, not for the many, and were linked to the inability of the state to provide security for all citizens. These viewpoints showed the benefits that gated communities' residents might get, with security being the uppermost priority. Simultaneously, people not living in gated communities might find it hard to cope with increasing urban insecurity.

Security was also a major concern for the outside local communities. Amanda (51-year-old small-scale trader, "Altos de la Puntilla"'s resident) mentioned: *"There is insecurity and robberies everywhere! Here in this neighbourhood they've stolen all the knobs from the fence doors. My next door neighbours had very expensive machinery locked in the garage which was stolen and nobody saw anything!"*. Rosa, who was a member of "Fuchs"'s residents' association, said: *"There are insecurity problems everywhere. We've set up a community alarm here in the neighbourhood, which is a system that alerts neighbours in cases of robberies or emergencies. If you see something strange, you press a button and this sends a signal to other neighbours and the police. Everybody has to take some responsibilities"*<sup>86</sup>. For Marcos (35-year-old mechanic, "Urundel"'s resident): *"There is insecurity, but it doesn't depend on*

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<sup>86</sup> These community alarms were implemented in several neighbourhoods of MAM as a security measure encouraged by the provincial government at the beginning of the 2000s. It is a digital system with lights and sounds that alerts all connected houses in cases of robberies or emergencies. It is based on solidarity and interaction amongst neighbours.

*us, it's more the government's responsibility. And if the people from the government don't improve urban security, not only Palmares will be gated, but even a neighbourhood like ours will be gated, and non-residents won't be allowed".*

The outside residents had divided opinions about gated communities being a solution to urban insecurity. Although most thought they were a solution which justified their increase, as Amanda, who said: *"I think they're a solution and this is why many new neighbourhoods are gated"*, others considered that gated communities were not a solution to crime: *"The increase in delinquency is due to unemployment and starving people... A gated community isn't the solution to the lack of security"* (Lorna). Many "outsiders" emphasised that gated communities could be a solution for their residents, but not for the outside communities: *"Gated communities are a solution for the people who live there, but not for those who are in the surrounding areas"* (Marcos). For Griselda (54-year-old housewife, "Obras Sanitarias"'s resident): *"Gated communities could be a solution for the houses to be more protected, but not for the people... When they go out of the neighbourhood they are like everybody else; they could even be more exposed..."*.

These viewpoints show that "outsiders" also valued security, were worried about it and implemented security devices. Although some considered that gated communities could be a solution to urban crimes, this was deemed as limited since their residents would need to have contact with the "outside world". According to "outsiders" and some interviewed "insiders", this means that it is not possible for "insiders" to totally isolate themselves from the city and the society as a whole through the use of security devices, such as walls and fences.

In the opinion of both "insiders" and "outsiders", security was the main reason to explain the existence of gated communities. However, "insiders" seemed more worried about urban insecurity than "outsiders". Security appeared as a major issue concerning all interviewed Palmares' residents, regardless of their age or gender. They seemed to be "over-worried" about this issue because they demanded more and better security devices in Palmares, as shown in Chapter 5, and it was of major concern in all their activities. This over-protection would negatively influence possible social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" since the need to



emplace security devices would mean physical obstacles for these social interactions. “Outsiders” also understood gated communities in relation to security, but considered these as a solution for only a few people. Acquiring status and exclusivity appeared as another important reason for moving into this type of settlement.

#### **6.1.2. Social status and exclusivity of living in gated communities**

Most interviewees agreed that living in a gated community provides a higher social status to its residents. Sometimes social status was confused with class or socio-economic level. In this thesis, social status refers mainly to social esteem and a high position in the social structure, more as a consequence of the social actors’ perceptions rather than income levels.

Many Palmares’ residents considered status as a reason for moving there. But they did not recognise this as being their particular situation, but that of others’: *“Many people might be living here because of social status more than security... But look at me, I’m wearing shorts and a T-shirt and I say ‘hi’ to the guards, but I see women who go in their 4x4s and don’t look at the guards”* (Alejandra). José stated: *“By living in Palmares I don’t get any other benefit apart from security, not even prestige... but there are people who choose to live in Palmares, even sacrificing other things, just for the sake of living in Palmares and getting a higher social status”*. In addition, some residents seemed to believe they could acquire a higher social status because some people they considered with a higher social status than theirs, such as well known professionals or business people, were already living in Palmares, and also because of the prestige of the gated community itself: *“Palmares will continue to grow because it has a lot of prestige”* (Rodrigo). Víctor (50-year-old solicitor) commented: *“I didn’t move to Palmares because of social status”*, but then he added: *“Living in Palmares is a sign of my professional success as a lawyer”*.

For other residents social status seemed to be associated with the “need to show off”, which appeared to be related to the Mendocinean way of life. Soledad (37-year-old housewife, Palmares’ resident), who was from Buenos Aires but had lived in Mendoza for 13 years, said: *“Physical appearance is paramount in Mendoza... There are people who don’t have a good economic situation, but they have to pretend they are better than the rest...”*. For Manuel, *“Mendoza is all about simulators...”*

*There is an imitation effect... and it's considered that those who live in Palmares have economic power". Adela, a Spanish woman living in Palmares, expressed: "Here in Mendoza people ask you: Where do you live?; Where does your husband work? Things that I'd never ask in Madrid... I think that these issues interest them a lot when they're forming a group. They pay a lot of attention to this". Similarly, Felipe said: "I have a very critical opinion of the Mendocinean society because it's a very cruel society... It's a society that rejects outsiders... Social insertion is very difficult and is related to social climbing and also the surname you bear". Referring to Palmares, Felipe added: "Ostentation and physical appearance exist in the neighbourhood... They upset me and even worry me... because today if I look at Palmares from the highway and see such houses... Well, I think it isn't good from a security point of view and also as a neighbour... There is ostentation, especially in the second stage of Palmares".*

As these narratives point out, many residents considered that acquiring a higher social status was an important reason for some people to move to Palmares, but it did not reflect their personal situations. They recognised that some particular groups of residents show a desire for ostentation and exclusivity, however, they considered that this did not apply only to the gated community, but it was also a characteristic of some Mendocinean social groups.

Some "insiders" linked social status to exclusivity. This was discussed during the interviews since one of the marketing brochures of the second stage of Palmares' development said that it would become *"the most exclusive neighbourhood of Mendoza"*. Most residents believed that this gated community was not an exclusive settlement because *"it doesn't have a golf course"* (Marisa, 58-year-old notary) or *"there are better houses elsewhere"* (Lionel, 24-year-old student). Gerardo added: *"To me the most exclusive gated communities are 'Club de Campo Mendoza' or 'La Vacherie' because they have rules or conditions to become a resident: you have to pay \$12,000 and buy shares in the club first, in addition to buying the plot"*<sup>87</sup>. Residents also referred to plot sizes and number of houses as non-exclusive features in a settlement: *"A place where there are 285 families and will increase to about 700*

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<sup>87</sup> "Club de Campo Mendoza" and "La Vacherie" are both *"clubes de campo"*. See Chapter 2 for the differences between *"clubes de campo"* and *"closed neighbourhoods"*.

*families isn't exclusive" (Sara). For Edgardo (41-year-old accountant), "Palmares isn't an exclusive settlement. We're all middle-class families. Plots aren't very big".*

Many interviewed residents questioned the meaning of exclusivity and made a distinction between exclusivity in terms of the people who lived in Palmares and exclusivity related to its location or its attributes. In this respect, Celina summarised what most interviewed residents thought about this: *"It depends on what you understand by exclusive. If exclusive is an expensive place where only upper-class people live, I think that Palmares isn't exclusive. I see many middle-class people because of the plot sizes that do not allow very big houses... But we can say it's exclusive in the sense that it has a shopping mall that no other neighbourhood has"<sup>88</sup> ... You have a bank, a supermarket, cinemas, restaurants, a chemist's... all these shops which add an extra value in relation to other gated communities... You don't need to go out of here to go shopping... and this is important to me".*

Only two interviewed residents fully agreed on the exclusivity of Palmares as the marketing brochure suggested: *"Today Palmares is the most exclusive neighbourhood because of the 'type' of people living here and also for the quality of the houses... It's not so big either ..."* (Miguel). Clara felt upset and said: *"I feel there is something I've missed due to living in such an exclusive place... After all the advantages you find out that it's all an illusion and that this isn't Argentina because when I go out and go by "Corredor del Oeste" then I say 'this is Argentina', when I see how much inequality and injustice there is... Here in Palmares you're isolated... In this sense, it's a an exclusive settlement where you don't see real life".*

The discussion about the exclusivity of Palmares seems to indicate that its residents are in denial about it. This exclusive character is denied as it seems to be a negative factor, which is reinforced by some opinions emphasising the potential isolation from reality as a consequence of living in an exclusive place. Nevertheless, Palmares is deemed as exclusive by its residents because of the provision of services and infrastructure within its premises and also because of the shopping centre built mainly to serve its population.

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<sup>88</sup> As explained in Chapter 5, the shopping centre is outside the gated community, but many residents considered it as part of the settlement.

The narratives by those living in the gated community show that living in Palmares was linked to acquiring a higher social status and exclusivity. However, most residents denied this as an influencing factor for their personal decision to move to Palmares and mentioned no interest in these issues. They contradicted themselves when they said that some people might have chosen Palmares as a place to live to get exclusivity or feel exclusive, but they considered that this gated community was not an exclusive settlement, except for having good services.

Members of the surrounding communities and most “other sources” also agreed that living in a gated community would mean acquiring a higher social status to many of Palmares’ residents. Regarding the exclusiveness of Palmares, there were some disagreements amongst the interviewed “outsiders”. Most of them said Palmares could be considered the most exclusive neighbourhood in MAM. Gabriel (25-year-old secondary school teacher from “Fuchs”) gave three reasons to justify this: *“Firstly, I tried to enter to know the place and I couldn’t because to be able to get in I needed an appointment to see a plot<sup>89</sup>; secondly, there are only four or five housing prototypes that you’re allowed to build because they’re trying to follow some guidelines and some architectural style...; thirdly, moneywise it’s exclusive... they know that the ‘cachet’ is going to be from a specific amount of money upwards... I can’t go to Palmares because of my income, which isn’t high enough...”*. Lucía, (26-year-old secondary school teacher, also from “Fuchs”) stated: *“I know some people who are very snobbish and they moved to Palmares to show off”*.

Talking about “insiders”, Micaela, the owner of a real estate agency that sells houses and plots in Palmares was of the opinion that: *“There are people who have a lot of money and others who don’t, but they simply have Palmares as the goal of their lives and maybe this is the only thing they have... and they make a great effort and sacrifice to be in Palmares”*. She added: *“The main reason for buying a house in a gated community is nowadays security... But it’s also because some people like highlighting their living standard, because people who live in Palmares have high incomes... However some people don’t like it, even if they could afford living in a gated community. They don’t like it because of their ethical values. They want to be*

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<sup>89</sup> See Chapter 7, Section 7.1.2.

*ordinary people, not different from the rest...*". Micaela pointed out individual factors that seemed to prevail over structural conditions. Although insecurity affects all citizens, not everybody who can afford it has chosen to live in a gated community.

Similarly to what some interviewed Palmares' residents said, Rogelio, a developer who was a partner in the initial stage of Palmares and later built up other gated communities in MAM, disagreed on the exclusivity of Palmares: *"Exclusive neighbourhoods are of a small scale, like 'Rincón de Chacras'""<sup>90</sup>, which has 70 plots and 50 top quality houses"*. A few other "outsiders" manifested that Palmares was not the most exclusive settlement and considered other gated communities as more exclusive: *"'La Vacherie' is more exclusive because it's a 'club de campo'"* (Amanda). Belinda (49-year-old housewife, "Fuchs" resident) added: *"If you want to build an exclusive neighbourhood you don't do it here, because there isn't enough space and it isn't going to be isolated..."*.

These views evidence that most non-residents deemed Palmares as an exclusive neighbourhood. Nevertheless, a small group of non-residents pointed out that because of its size and location Palmares could not be considered as exclusive.

From the narratives reviewed, there seems to be a strong relationship between living in Palmares and acquiring a higher social status and exclusivity, despite this being denied by residents as their individual reason for living there. According to interviewees, there are some elements of Palmares, such as its services and amenities and its population, which could denote some exclusivity. But other elements, such as its location, plot sizes and population size, would reinforce the idea that it is not an exclusive gated community. A variety of viewpoints thus exist within the interviewed residents. This was also the case for non-residents, although most of them agreed on the exclusivity of this gated community. The next sub-section explores the last issue discussed in relation to living in gated communities and that is the viewpoints about the future of gated communities in Mendoza.

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<sup>90</sup> "Rincón de Chacras" is a gated community located in Chacras de Coria (see Figures 5.3 and A.4).

### 6.1.3. The future of gated communities in Mendoza

The future of this type of settlement in MAM was discussed with all interviewees. It was important to see whether the development of gated communities was considered a temporary phenomenon related to the rise of urban insecurity or a process that could remain and continue to expand within the city. It is significant in relation to urban social group segregation to examine whether this process in reference to specific social groups might scale up.

Most interviewed Palmares' residents agreed that gated communities in Mendoza would continue to increase in number. Consistent with all previous arguments, the main reason given was urban insecurity: *"Gated communities will increase if the country remains as it is and security remains as it is today"* (Alejandra); *"They will continue to increase because people are really desperate to get more security in their houses"* (Carina); *"If this situation continues, if security doesn't get better, those who can access to these ghettos will continue to do so"* (José); *"They will continue to increase if the government and security don't change"* (Gretel). Some residents also mentioned the increase number of "open neighbourhoods" requesting authorisation to become gated.

Although previous opinions considered gated communities as temporary phenomenon that could change if urban security improved, other residents deemed this type of settlement with a global trend: *"They will increase doubtless; it's a worldwide trend"* (Roberto, 46-year-old solicitor); *"This is a copy of what is happening in the First World; gated communities are a symbol of globalised Argentina"* (Gastón); *"This a project that comes from USA and from Europe..."* (Soledad).

A small number of interviewed Palmares' residents believed that gated communities will not expand much due to the lack of available land near the central area of the city or excessive costs: *"I don't think gated communities will expand a lot because there aren't many places to build them on and people don't want to go far away; people from Mendoza want everything close"* (Graciela). Marisol (53-year-old sociologist) stated: *"I think the market of gated communities is nearly saturated"* and Amadeo (51-year-old solicitor) added: *"Small schemes of about 16 houses will*

increase. These houses will have a common swimming pool with only one street and houses on both sides... But schemes like Palmares are restrictive because of the high costs of the plots". This last comment shows that the concept of gated community varies and this type of residential scheme with 16 houses hardly fits in the definition of gated community provided by the conceptual framework of this thesis.

Similar to the majority of "insiders", all interviewed outside residents believed that gated communities would continue to expand in number in the near future due to urban insecurity: *"They will be more and more gated communities. There were only a handful of them five or six years ago, and now I think they are like 40-ish. It's mainly because of security problems that gated communities are wanted, when you feel that there is impotence about this issue and aggression grows and you can't defend yourself, and unfortunately the police can't cope with this... and gated communities have their own defence"* (Leopoldo). Moreover, "outsiders" also pointed out that their increase would be related not only to urban insecurity, but also to increasing urban inequalities and the need for differentiation. Gema said: *"I think that if inequalities between the one who can and the one who can't, between the one who has options and the one who doesn't, persist or increase, then gated communities will continue to expand"*. For Gabriel: *"There is always going to be a demand for gated communities... until the gated community would be something so common that we'll need something different and then the gated-gated community<sup>91</sup> will come. It isn't only about security but also because when something is very common, then we need something different again. I think the distinction is important. On the one hand, because of security, I think all neighbourhoods will end up with some security devices, which is different from building new gated communities in terms of the quality of life and the construction quality they have... In this sense, the city will never be totally gated. All neighbourhoods can't be similar to Palmares..."*.

Two interviewed residents from "Fuchs" and "Altos de la Puntilla" had bought plots to build on their houses in other gated communities in MAM. One of them elaborated: *"I bought a plot in a gated community because it isn't possible to live in the 'open city'; if you have a permanent job and you have savings, what can you do?"*

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<sup>91</sup> This gated-gated community referred to by Gabriel might be similar to the "mega-project", which is one type of gated community in Argentina, as explained Chapter 2.

*Am I going to stay outside to be robbed or killed? Something can happen to you inside the gated community as well, but if you can prevent this, you do it...; besides, I want to have children and if you can give them the quality of life we had when we were kids, today they can't be outside... they get their bikes stolen. If you can give this quality of life to your children, of course gated communities will continue to increase... Someone who criticises gated communities is because s/he has never lived in one of them*" (Flavia, 28-year-old lawyer, "Altos de la Puntilla"'s resident). This shows how the increase in the number of gated communities might indicate that living in gated communities would not remain as something exclusive for affluent or upper-middle class citizens, but also for middle-class residents.

If gated communities become more affordable, they would be chosen as a place of residence by some middle-class social groups. Most interviewed members of the local outside communities said that they would like to live in Palmares mainly due to fear of crime and also to be more comfortable or because they liked that gated community: *"I would like to live in Palmares to be more protected and to have a larger house with a garden because this house has a very small one"* (Amanda). There were differences amongst "outsiders" related to their socio-economic level: whilst all residents from "Altos de la Puntilla", the upper-middle class neighbourhood, manifested a desire to live in Palmares, there were some differences concerning the rest of the outside members. One third of the interviewed residents of "Fuchs", "Obras Sanitarias" and "Urundel" would not live in Palmares. Griselda provided reasons for this: *"First of all, because it's hard to pay taxes here and I imagine that it would be harder in Palmares... and we have lots of friends and I think that the fact of having to go in and out passing the security checks would be difficult... We have many meetings and it would be more controlled..."*. These words show that outside residents were conscious about the level of incomes needed to live in a gated community and their personal limitations since they could not afford this. They also referred to rules and control regulating everyday life in the gated community and the difficulty to get used to them. This might indicate two different issues in relation to the future of gated communities. Firstly, gated communities would need to become more affordable to target middle-class groups. Secondly, even if they become more affordable, this does not mean that they would be the most



preferred housing option for all citizens since some people do not like the security controls or the existence of rules enforced on their premises.

“Other sources” interviewed also agreed on the idea that the number of gated communities in Mendoza might increase in the near future. Ernesto, the Director of Urban Planning of Godoy Cruz, gave a detailed opinion of what could happen to these settlements: *“It’ll be highly related to the security conditions in the city. At the end of the day, the demand will increase or decrease according to the levels of fragmentation of the society. If there is 50 percent of poverty and 25 percent of marginality, gated communities’ demand will potentially increase”*. Rubén and Basilio, two councillors from the Municipality of Godoy Cruz, expressed: *“Gated communities will continue to expand, but they’ll be aimed at different socio-economic levels, not only rich people”*. Also Micaela, the real estate agent, said: *“There is a strong trend towards increasing gated communities... nowadays living in a gated community is in fashion”*.

This sub-section provided viewpoints about the future of gated communities in Mendoza. Most interviewed actors agreed on the probable increase in the number of gated communities in the near future. However, some of them pointed out that gated communities would need to become more affordable for middle-class groups for this to happen. Some also mentioned that because of the rules and security control, not everybody would like to live in these closed settlements, even if they could afford it, which emphasises the relevance of individual factors influencing the decision to live in a gated community.

The subjective elements provided by interviewees through their viewpoints to justify living in gated communities were elaborated in this section. Although urban insecurity was mentioned as the most obvious reason for moving to gated communities and seemed to be the easiest form to justify this residential choice, it is worth noting that the development of these settlements does not seem to be exclusively related to urban insecurity, but to other issues like acquiring a higher social status and exclusivity. Nevertheless, the latter was hardly recognised as a personal interest, but an interest of other people. Gated communities would be likely to increase in number regardless of urban insecurity being improved or not because

residents mentioned two contradictory situations concerning their future. While some residents deemed these settlements as a temporary phenomenon that could disappear if urban security improved, others considered them as a global trend that imitates what happens in other countries and consequently as a more permanent situation. In relation to this thesis the question that the future of gated communities raises is whether the process of urban social group segregation that might be carried out by those who live in these closed settlements would also scale up in the city should they increase, and what the consequences of this could be.

## **6.2. Viewpoints about social differences**

This section reviews values, feelings, attitudes and knowledge held by interviewees and expressed through their viewpoints about social differences and living in gated communities. These refer to three main topics: the existing social differences between gated communities' residents and non-residents (Sub-section 6.2.1), the image of the gated community and its consequences (Sub-section 6.2.2), and finally the issue of social discrimination (Sub-section 6.2.3). These three topics are relevant for the thesis since they might influence social practices and particular viewpoints and consequently influence urban social group segregation.

### **6.2.1. Gated communities and social inequalities**

Social differences and their physical manifestation in the urban landscape are not a new phenomenon. In the context of gated communities, social inequalities become a relevant issue since these settlements appropriate and restrict the use of particular spaces that otherwise would be for the use of the public. They also have a controlled access and discriminate against those who can or cannot go into them (and sometimes between those who can live there and those who cannot). As previously noted in this thesis, the physical barriers that prevent penetration by non-residents appear as some of their peculiar attributes, which express social differences. In addition, the existence of communal amenities and services demand maintenance fees, which usually imply high incomes, reducing the target population of gated communities to a particular social group. This sub-section is divided into two further sub-sections. 6.2.1.1 elaborates on the viewpoints about whether gated communities produce social differentiation or make social divides in the city more visible; 6.2.1.2

examines the differences between how Palmares' residents described themselves as a social group and how they were perceived by other social actors.

#### 6.2.1.1. *Do gated communities produce or express social differences?*

This is a frequent question amongst researchers and academics studying gated communities and there is no agreement on its answer. This research addressed this question in the interviews to get the opinion of gated communities' residents and other citizens living close to them or being in contact with their development. The responses given could be divided into two groups of arguments: a) *"gated communities evidence social differences, but do not create them"*; and b) *"gated communities do not make social differences noticeable"*. Within the first group of arguments, there are two sub-groups: a-1) *"social differences exist and will always exist"*; and a-2) *"a small elite lives here"*. Some of these arguments explicitly relate to living in gated communities and segregation.

a-1) The first sub-group of arguments refers to those who agreed that social differences are more visible as a result of the emergence of gated communities, but that they exist anyway, meaning that gated communities did not produce social differences. According to interviewed Palmares' residents: *"There are nicer neighbourhoods with very nice houses and also with poorer houses in every city... It isn't about gated communities... It isn't the same to say 'I live in Las Heras'<sup>92</sup> than I live in Godoy Cruz'... I think divisions already exist..."* (Graciela)<sup>93</sup>. They also pointed out that there were other neighbourhoods in the city that could be wealthier than the gated community: *"There are many people living in the city centre who have more money than people living in Palmares"* (Gerardo). For Carla: *"People who are outside think that a gated community is for distinguished people..."*. Julieta added: *"Now people think that I have more money because I live in Palmares, but it isn't like that. We've maintained the same living standard than when we lived in a non-gated neighbourhood"*. This group of answers emphasised that people living in Palmares were not affluent or "distinguished people".

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<sup>92</sup> Las Heras and Maipú are the poorest municipalities of MAM (See Chart A.1 in Appendix A).

<sup>93</sup> See Roitman (2008b: 7).

Similar to what some gated communities' residents expressed, most interviewed outside residents believed that social differences were an inherent feature of urban society and therefore not particularly related to the development of gated communities: *"Social equality doesn't exist; we're never going to achieve it despite of what politicians say..."* (Mónica). Armando said: *"Social differences have always existed... 15 or 20 years ago if you went to "Bombal"<sup>94</sup> neighbourhood... You couldn't talk to someone from that neighbourhood and it didn't have barriers... or to someone living in "Quinta Sección" ... You had to look at them with your head nearly down because they had a lot of money"*. Felisa, from "Urundel", stated: *"These differences have always existed... It's the reality and we're like chalk and cheese ["Urundel" and Palmares]"*. Belinda was of the opinion that: *"There are social differences in every society, in every group... Someone points out the difference or someone makes you feel it... and you belong to one group or the other... and just have to accept it"*.

For Leopoldo, gated communities made social differences obvious, but *"this is everywhere in the world... not only here"*. Talking about Palmares and its surrounding local communities, he commented that differences between "insiders" and "outsiders" were evident because *"they have social status and we don't and this means that they have money and we don't"*. His comment shows that the meaning of social status is often confused and it is considered that only those with high social status have social status. Also some of the outside residents referred to the physical elements and security devices of gated communities as instruments to mark social differences, in the same way as some Palmares' residents<sup>95</sup>.

From these opinions, social differences are considered a feature of urban life and the existence of social inequalities is not related to the existence of gated communities. Nevertheless, they express social differences.

a-2) The second sub-group of arguments within those who thought that gated communities express social differences, but not create them were those who

<sup>94</sup> Similar to "Quinta Sección", "Bombal" is an upper-class residential area close to the city centre. Most of Palmares' residents formerly lived in these two areas.

<sup>95</sup> This is discussed in Chapter 7 in relation to the practice of the use of public space.

recognised that these differences are more noticeable because only a small portion of society has access to them. There is an emphasis on the exclusivity of the social group who lives in this type of settlement. According to Palmares' residents: *"Not everybody can live in a gated community. There is an extra economic expenditure, so there is a difference in terms of income... and there are other social differences like access to education... all kids from gated communities attend private schools... There are differences and you can notice them... it's a different social class"* (Miguel)<sup>96</sup>. Rodrigo linked gated communities to elite groups: *"Elites start developing and they self-reinforce each other... they marry amongst themselves... attend the same schools, same clubs, and practise the same sports"*. In relation to the difference between gated communities and their surrounding areas, he added: *"They are the two extremes of society, the maximum difference, from the poorest to the richest... but I think that the disadvantage isn't created by the gated community, but by the social condition and social mess existing in this country... children can't naturally coexist with all social strata, they live isolated, it's like a ghetto"*<sup>97</sup>.

Some interviewed residents explicitly used the words *"elite"* and *"ghetto"* when discussing social differences. However, as the following opinions show, there was some confusion with the meaning of ghetto, considering that the ghetto could imply a voluntary seclusion<sup>98</sup>. For Roberto: *"The gated community is in a way a ghetto... like the Warsaw ghetto for the Jews. Here you have people who're fed up of being robbed and that's why they live here... The ghetto means living amongst themselves, particularly in the case of many children from Palmares... It's all closed and they're closed off from society, but sooner or later they'll have to relate to the society..."*. Luisa (50-year-old property owner, Palmares' resident) added: *"I have friends who consider Palmares as a bunker... and they hate bunkers because they think that the socio-economic situation should be better for all of us and not just for a group living in a ghetto"*.

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<sup>96</sup> See Roitman (2008b: 7).

<sup>97</sup> This reference to isolation as a disadvantage of living in gated communities is later examined in relation to the socialisation practice in Chapter 8.

<sup>98</sup> See Marcuse (2001) for a discussion on the difference between ghettos as not voluntary settlements and enclaves as voluntary settlements.

Interviewed “outsiders” did not refer to ghettos in relation to Palmares’ residents, but to elite groups, as discussed later in Sub-section 6.2.1.2. Regardless of their socio-economic level, age and gender, they mentioned that social differences were more evident in the city due to the existence of gated communities. Griselda considered that gated communities make social differences more evident *“because the social status of those living there isn’t the same than ours... Not everybody can live in a gated community, and I’m referring to economic positions”*. Vanina (22-year-old girl), who lived in “Urundel”, the informal settlement close to Palmares, believed that social differences are expressed in the different housing standards between the gated community and the outside neighbourhoods: *“They build enormous houses, while here we have such small houses”*. Outside interviewees also referred to differences in power relations: *“It isn’t the same when you go to the municipality and say you live here in “Urundel” and that you need 2,000 bricks and let’s suppose that you’re in ‘Los Palmares’ and then you go to the municipality... It isn’t the same, you’ll be heard more than me... because you live in ‘Los Palmares’ and you have a better house than me... We go to the municipality dressed like this, like any other citizen, and we’re not welcome. It’d be different if we’d go in suits and each of us arrives in a vehicle...like those from Palmares...”* (Marcos).

Some “other sources” also agreed that gated communities make social differences visible. Ernesto, Director of Urban Planning of Godoy Cruz, said: *“That can’t be denied. We have gated communities with people with very high incomes and also a big mass of dispossessed people living under the poverty line”*. Micaela, the real estate agent, added: *“Most people think that gated communities make social differences more apparent... the difference now is that this is being justified by urban insecurity”*.

This second group of arguments show that many interviewees thought that gated communities made social differences more visible in the urban landscape. “Insiders” referred to these differences in relation to having a social group living in a gated community who isolated itself and considered itself as an elite or a group living in a ghetto. Although they did not explicitly mention segregation, separation as a result of social differences was implicit. In the case of other interviewees, they did not refer so

strongly to separation, but more to differentiation related to higher social status and higher incomes.

b) Finally, there is a small group of interviewed residents who did not agree that gated communities either produced or expressed social differences: *“I don’t think gated communities evidence social differences because there are people who moved here to be more relaxed... I think people didn’t move here to demonstrate to others that they live in Palmares”* (Enrique, 40-year-old gym teacher). According to Víctor: *“It could be that some people are upset with gated communities, but they don’t increase social differences”*. For Amadeo: *“Gated communities don’t make social differences visible. The gated community is a necessity for family protection against public insecurity... It isn’t an issue of economic discrimination”*. These opinions show that gated communities are recognised as a consequence of the need to feel more relaxed and comfortable and not related to particular social conditions of their residents. It is worth noting that outsiders did not provide answers that could be considered within this group since all of them linked gated communities with social differences.

The analysis of the three groups of arguments shows that many interviewees agreed on considering social differences as something beyond the existence of gated communities, but as an inherent feature of urban contemporary societies. Therefore, they do not produce social differences. However, whilst all interviewed outside residents agreed that gated communities make social differences more evident, there was a fracture amongst Palmares residents since a few of them did not agree with this argument. In addition, “insiders” related social differences with separation, and implicitly also with segregation because they referred to ghettos and elite groups<sup>99</sup>. Differently, “outsiders” and “other sources” related social differences between gated communities’ residents and non-residents with social and economic differences, and particularly with “insiders” having a higher social status. There were no different viewpoints expressed as a consequence of age, gender or socio-economic differences.

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<sup>99</sup> As previously mentioned, there is a frequent confusion with the meaning of ghetto and some interviewees considered it a voluntary phenomenon.

To sum up, in the first sub-group (a-1), residents tried to make social differences appear less strong in relation to living in gated communities, pointing out that although the latter might express social differences, their residents are not the wealthiest social group, but more “normal people” or “middle class”, as explained in the next sub-section. Conversely, in the second sub-group (a-2), residents emphasised the differences. For them gated communities’ residents are an elite group. Finally, in the last argument (b), a small group of residents denied that gated communities mark social differences.

#### 6.2.1.2. Viewpoints about Palmares’ residents: who are they?

This sub-section aims at comparing the different viewpoints by “insiders”, “outsiders” and other interviewees about the characterisation of Palmares’ residents.

When Palmares’ residents described themselves as a group, they gave two different answers: one concerning age, family structure and professions; the other referring to class and socio-economic level. In the first case, they said residents were “*mainly professionals, especially young professionals with young children*” (Marianela, 34-year-old housewife) or “*most people are of my age, with children of ages like mine... I think there are more young than old people here*” (Samuel). For Esteban, “*there are many families in formation, many children and ‘empty-nesters’ who have come here because of security, and want to be here for the rest of their lives*”.

Within the second group, who mentioned socio-economic level, there are two sub-groups: 1) those who considered Palmares’ population was heterogeneous; and 2) those who thought it was mainly homogeneous. Answers from those within the first sub-group were for example: “*There are people from all social levels, all careers, all jobs, good people and bad people, like in any other place*” (Juan) and “*I think it’s very diverse. There are people with a lot of money and there are people who just have their salaries and decided to come to live here because of security. They like living here and they have a small house, built on just one plot, and live one day at a time*” (Marianela). Alejandra identified two groups of residents, according to different reasons for living in Palmares: “*One group is upper-middle class, with children and lots of teenagers who have prioritised security... and the second group is formed by snobs ... people who might be here more for status than security*”.



The second sub-group of residents considered Palmares' population was relatively homogeneous, mainly middle-and upper-middle class: *"Any type of people, normal people, middle-class, upper-middle class people... but well, middle-class and upward"* (Fernando). Julieta (26-year-old lawyer) said: *"Middle-class people; normal people. It isn't that you pay much more here than what you could pay outside if you have to hire a security guard and set up an alarm in your house and car"*. Some residents did not believe that Palmares was an affluent neighbourhood: *"We're all hard working people. This isn't the 'neighbourhood of the rich guys' where nobody does anything... There are more exclusive neighbourhoods than this one"* (Lionel). In relation to this opinion, and different from what has been recorded in gated communities in other countries, it is worth noting that residents emphasised the "commonality" of their neighbourhood, saying that there were no "celebrities", although there were two or three very successful and well known business people living there. Curiously, when asked 'Who lives in Palmares?', many said *"there are no politicians here"*. This was in a context where politics was considered primarily as a corrupt activity and therefore many citizens wanted to avoid contact with politicians as well as participation in political activities.

The surrounding communities considered Palmares' residents as upper-middle class or affluent citizens. Their viewpoints varied according to their socio-economic level. Within the examined outside neighbourhoods, "Altos de la Puntilla"'s residents held the highest position in the social ladder, the gap between them and Palmares' residents being the smallest, as far as income level is concerned. However, most "Altos de la Puntilla"'s residents considered Palmares' residents different from themselves because people living in that gated community had higher incomes. For example, Armando, a civil engineer who lived in that neighbourhood, mentioned: *"Every time I go in there, I see the houses and my mouth drops!"*. Despite Palmares' residents being thought of as upper-class, they were not considered a homogeneous social group: *"They are people who're a bit better than us in their economic situation to be able to live there in Palmares... Although I don't think they're an elite because there are sumptuous houses, nice and important, but also others that aren't so important... And monthly maintenance fees are low... not as expensive as in*

*“Dalvian”<sup>100</sup> ...*” (Amanda, from “Altos de la Puntilla”). Conversely, Lorna, who also lived in “Altos de la Puntilla”, found herself not so far from some of Palmares’ residents: *“There are differences inside Palmares... there is middle-class towards upper class...; people with a lot of money and people, like it could have been us at some point if the crisis had not hit us... People who aimed at a medium-sized house, with a nice garden, three bedrooms... something simple... ”*.

Residents of the other three neighbourhoods (“Fuchs”, “Obras Sanitarias” and “Urundel”) regarded people living in Palmares as a homogeneous group and recognised that there was a big gap between them and Palmares’ residents. They usually referred to the latter as *“the very rich”* (Catalina, 46-year-old home-help from “Urundel”) or *“people with a high income that exceeds common people’s, like doctors, trade union leaders and company owners”* (Mónica). The last opinion shows how “outsiders” linked a high socio-economic level with certain professions. Marcos added: *“They’re office people, not people working with tools... They’re accountants and lawyers”*; Vanina said: *“They’re business people”*, while Cristóbal summarised them as *“politicians”*, even when Palmares’ residents explicitly mentioned there were no politicians living there. Gabriel commented his experience: *“I wanted my parents to move to a gated community like Palmares and I checked prices. And I think it doesn’t make sense considering what middle or lower-middle classes can afford... It’s impossible! I guess this homogenise a particular way of living, of high-class... ”*. For Gema, the difference between an “open neighbourhood” and a gated community was that in the former *“there are people with different incomes; some people have more, others less and we all live together”*.

Most interviewed outside neighbours thought that Palmares’ residents were affluent and better positioned than themselves and they had positive viewpoints about them: *“They’re nice people and it’s a nice and comfortable neighbourhood”* (Amanda); *“Palmares is in fashion nowadays and it’s one of the better known neighbourhoods in Mendoza ”* (Lorna); *“They have more money than us, but I think they should be good people”* (Lucas).

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<sup>100</sup> “Dalvian” is the oldest gated community in MAM,as mentioned in Appendix A.

There was, however, a minority group who had some negative opinions about Palmares' residents. For Gabriel, *"They have high legal and illegal incomes... not always illegal, but there is always the prejudice that they're thieves"*. Catalina was of the opinion that *"They don't sleep peacefully... I was swindled by them"<sup>101</sup> ...*. Finally, for Cristóbal: *"That category of people who think they own everything... The police itself says that it isn't allowed to enter to verify or see things... How can that be possible? Being a gated community doesn't mean that nobody has access to it... They have their rights, but shouldn't walk over others"*. There were also opinions of indifference within "outsiders" about "insiders".

The position of other actors such as local and provincial government staff, real estate agents and developers, or people who had contact with Palmares' residents was closer to the interviewed members of the outside communities (except that of "Altos de la Puntilla"'s residents) than to Palmares' residents. They all considered the latter as *"affluent people"*, as does Ernesto. Furthermore, the concept of "elite" appears in some of their opinions. Augusto (architect, provincial government) said: *"They belong to an elite that is different; it has other codes and other possibilities, other needs for which they have this type of residence"*. Micaela, the real estate agent, explained: *"The elite of Mendoza now lives in Palmares and other gated communities"*.

The security staff working in Palmares characterised Palmares' residents as both *"common people and also people with a lot of money"* (Horacio); *"people who stand out financially... Not everybody can live here... a worker can't live here in Palmares because what they pay for the monthly maintenance fees is equal to my whole salary"* (Jorge). It is worth noting that whilst this second security guard considered himself as a worker and, therefore, different from Palmares' residents, another guard positioned himself as a member of the middle-class, but distinguishing this group from Palmares' residents. According to the latter, "insiders" were *"people who have a different social position than us, but they are people like us, normal and educated people. The only difference is that they have a better job and more money and, therefore, they live better"*. He added: *"Not everybody in terms of socio-economic*

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<sup>101</sup> See Practice 4 in Chapter 7.

*level could live in Palmares because with the salaries that we, the middle-class, have I don't think it would be possible"* (Joaquín). Nicanor, the security chief, was of the opinion that *"the future leaders will be from Palmares"*.

The narratives from all these different actors show that whilst many of Palmares' residents avoided recognising their privileged position in the Mendocinean society, other actors deemed them as not merely middle-class, but affluent citizens since living in Palmares demanded high incomes. However, this does not apply to all "outsiders" as some "Altos de la Puntilla"'s residents believed there was not a big social gap between them and Palmares' residents. Most interviewed non-residents considered Palmares' residents as a homogeneous social group, although they recognised the existence of minor exceptions.

Following these opinions, the viewpoints of Palmares' residents contrasted with the viewpoints of people who worked in the gated community, the "outsiders" and "other sources". Palmares' residents either avoided referring to themselves according to socio-economic level, preferring to mention age and family structure as common characteristics, or considered themselves as a diverse group or a middle- and upper-middle-class group. Conversely, other actors considered the gated community's residents in a high position in the social structure and characterised them according to socio-economic level and not other features, such as family structure or education level.

The testimonies of the security guards show the difficulty of setting the limits of what the middle-class as a social group includes. Palmares' residents and one of the interviewed security guard both considered themselves as middle-class. The difference might be that whilst Palmares' residents belonged to the "successful" middle-class and upper-middle class, the security guard belonged to the "new poor" who were formerly part of the middle-class, but had suffered a downward mobility over the past years owing to structural adjustment policies.

This sub-section reviewed viewpoints about gated communities and social differences. It addressed first the argument that these closed settlements might encourage social differences. It shows that some interviewees agreed on this, but

considered that social differences are not a consequence of the development of gated communities, but a feature of urban societies. They also related gated communities with the need of security and comfort and not social differentiation. Conversely, other interviewees agreed that gated communities could make social differences more visible in cities because it is only an elite group who can live there. This group is considered to be in a higher position in the social structure by non-residents. These viewpoints are relevant for the thesis since they show how residents and non-residents considered people living in gated communities as a particular and different social group, which might lead them to separate themselves. In the case of “insiders”, some emphasised their differentiation as a group from the society as a whole. Nevertheless, this was a minority group and most interviewed “insiders” pointed out that they were part of the middle-classes, while most “outsiders” and “other sources” considered them as affluent citizens. This is related to the image of the gated community.

#### **6.2.2. Palmares’ image**

While the previous sub-section considered the viewpoints of all interviewees about the characterisation of Palmares’ residents, this sub-section examines the viewpoints given by Palmares’ residents about what they believed other actors thought about themselves. It also addresses the viewpoints about the image of Palmares, according to its residents and one of its major consequences that refers to residents avoiding mentioning where they live.

Palmares has created a particular image about itself and is one of the better known gated communities in MAM. Most interviewed Palmares’ residents said that non-residents living in the surrounding communities or elsewhere in the city saw Palmares “as a neighbourhood of people with money” (Rosario, 31-year-old interior designer from Palmares) or “millionaires” (Edgardo). However, they emphasised that they were not millionaires, but middle-class citizens, as explained in the previous sub-section. Sara remarked: “*We’re middle-class because of the maintenance fees... I pay less here than what I paid when I lived in a flat in the city centre, but people think we’re the rich guys of Mendoza*”. Alejandra commented that the husband of one of her work colleagues told her once: “*The one who lives in Palmares made money stealing, had a stroke of luck, or spent all his/her life*

working...*In which group are you?*". Gerardo's opinion summarised what the majority of the gated community's residents thought: *"The image the neighbourhood has created about itself is: exclusivity; lots of money; that we have security and the "outsiders" don't; selective; the access is difficult due to the enclosure; and maybe envy..."*.

A smaller group of interviewed residents had different opinions about the image of Palmares: *"There could be a tendency to think that it's a frivolous lifestyle for people living in Palmares and maybe they aren't so wrong; maybe gated communities make this situation to happen so that there is more frivolous and consumerist people than elsewhere"* (José). Clara said: *"I think that living in a neighbourhood like Palmares is like a pipe-dream that completes the idea that has the 'collective imaginary' of a perfect and idyllic place where everybody is happy"*.

These narratives show that most interviewed "insiders" thought that "outsiders" deemed Palmares' residents as affluent citizens, when they did not consider this to be the case. One of the major consequences of Palmares having the image of a *"neighbourhood for millionaires"* was that its residents avoided giving it as their address. Most interviewed residents commented they gave their real addresses to family and friends, but otherwise avoided saying that they lived in Palmares, and just mentioned the area or the municipality. This was due to three reasons. Firstly, they said they were charged more for services; secondly, because other people could think they were rich, and this was not true; and, finally, not to offend other people. In relation to the first reason, they remarked being charged more when sellers and suppliers knew they lived in Palmares: *"They always want to overcharge you"* (Esteban); *"When we were building the house I didn't say that it was in Palmares because they charge you 20 percent more, as if for living here you must have more money"* (Gerardo). Graciela commented on her experience: *"Depending on who is asking me my address... If it's somebody who's going to repair something in the house, I say 'Godoy Cruz' because they know that people from Palmares have more money and they'll charge 10 times more than if you live in 'Fuchs'"*.

The second reason according to Palmares' residents was that non-residents thought people from Palmares were rich: *"Since I live in Palmares I don't like saying that I*

*live here because people look at you like saying 'you are rich' and it isn't like that. I'm telling you that I go to work by bus"* (Julieta). María (53-year-old artist) said: *"I prefer to say that I live in Chacras<sup>102</sup> because I think people usually believe that those who live in Palmares are an elite and I don't feel part of that elite"*. Gastón expressed: *"I try to avoid saying where I live because I know it produces a sort of shock in those who, maybe because they've never been in Palmares, think we live in a paradise here; but it even happens with my friends since I moved to Palmares they say 'you, the one who lives in Palmares'..."*.

The last reason mentioned to avoid providing their real addresses was related to giving offence by emphasising social differences. Víctor commented he avoided saying where he lived *"when I see that it's people who might be bothered by this. If you're with people who don't have money and they're doing really bad, I say I live in Godoy Cruz"*. Carina added: *"I'm not sure if it's offensive, but I don't need to make that person feel bad with what I'm saying, and then I say I live in Godoy Cruz"*.

There were only two interviewed residents who acknowledged they always said they lived in Palmares. Nevertheless, they recognised that it could create negative reactions: *"I always say I live in Palmares, no matter who I'm talking to; and I've never received a negative comment, but I feel I'm making an imposition of elite when I'm saying I'm in Palmares; I feel it. But it isn't that I'm doing it on purpose, nor that I like it, but I've chosen to be part of an elite and not to be robbed and live securely"* (Rodrigo).

This sub-section shows that although residents considered Palmares as a "neighbourhood for middle-class people", the gated community had created the opposite: a particular image of a neighbourhood for affluent people. Consequently its residents avoided mentioning where they lived so as not to be categorised as "millionaires". Nevertheless, as shown in the previous sub-section, even when they did not always recognise it, some of Palmares' residents felt different from other social groups and thought of themselves as part of an elite group. These opinions of being different might encourage urban social group segregation or justify the way

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<sup>102</sup> "Chacras de Coria" is a residential area in the outskirts of MAM, as mentioned in Chapter 5 (See Figure 5.3).

some social practices are carried out, as analysed in Chapters 7 and 8. They also create situations of discrimination.

### 6.2.3. Discriminated against or discriminator?

Discrimination was a topic discussed with residents and non-residents. It is related to urban social group segregation since it establishes a clear separation between two sides: the one who feels discriminated against and the discriminator.

There were three positions when discussing discrimination in relation to Palmares: a) accepting that gated communities might discriminate against non-residents; b) denying any form of discrimination that these closed settlements might create; and c) saying that they felt discriminated against because of living in Palmares or because of not living there, respectively.

a) Regarding the first argument, some interviewees thought the existence of security devices was a discriminatory action<sup>103</sup>. Some residents said that the existence of a service entrance, differentiated from the entrance for residents and guests, was discriminatory: *"I went to see the manager of Palmares and told him that my gardener deserved to enter through the same entrance as me, and asked him why they had to discriminate workers"* (Marisa); *"The other day a guy was coming to repair something at home and it was a scandal because he wasn't allowed to get through the main entrance. I think this differentiation shouldn't be made"* (Gastón).

The fact that gated communities could discriminate against people who were not allowed to enter the residential compound was mentioned by "outsiders", as Leopoldo<sup>104</sup> expressed: *"The security system in Palmares, which can be very efficient, it's efficient for Palmares' residents, but it's terrible for us, the surrounding neighbours... We're about to start a legal action about discrimination. Do you know the meaning of Kelpers<sup>105</sup>? Well, we're the Kelpers and the British are the ones inside. Because all the controls, everything related to security is done outside the*

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<sup>103</sup> The use of security devices preventing access is discussed in Chapter 7, Practice 1.

<sup>104</sup> Leopold lived outside Palmares opposite the service entrance, where there is usually a queue of cars and workers waiting to enter the gated community. This is explained in Chapter 7.

<sup>105</sup> Kelpers are the people who live in the Malvinas Islands. It is used in a derogative manner in Argentina.



*service gate... Only those who are authorised can go in, the ones who have car insurance... the others stay outside... Palmares' residents can't have people eating in the streets [referring to the construction workers]. I have to put up with them because I'm not on the same level as them, because they have their own private security. The cars that can't go inside because they don't have their documentation in order I have to tolerate them because they are left outside the gate of Palmares*"<sup>106</sup>. Other "outsiders" remarked: *"To make workers enter through a different entrance is a way of discrimination because those are people who work... and if it weren't because of the builders, Palmares' residents wouldn't have those houses"* (Lucía).

Discrimination as an issue related to gated communities was also discussed with the "other sources". Rubén and Basilio, two councillors from Godoy Cruz, believed *"the gated communities' project is discriminatory because it's only related to affluent people... An assessment must be done to avoid one neighbourhood to negatively influence others... Palmares harms other neighbourhoods that already existed in the area because it doesn't allow them to access the supermarket directly and they have to make a longer trip"*<sup>107</sup>. As all these narratives point out, the security devices are deemed as a discriminatory factor, especially for those who do not live in Palmares.

b) Conversely, the second position was represented by those who denied any form of discrimination related to gated communities, and particularly related to the service entrance. Samuel, from A.Pro.CUP, said: *"We don't discriminate against. We just seek security and we make everybody wait outside. We do this to the builder, to the electrical engineer, to the construction company. It's a matter of security, not discrimination"*. Facundo, Palmares' manager, added: *"We don't discriminate against anybody. There are some rules that must be followed and we have a service access to make things more efficient"*.

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<sup>106</sup> See Roitman (2005a: 318) and Roitman (2006:127).

<sup>107</sup> This is the argument in relation to the legal status of Palmares and against its closure, as explained in Chapter 5.

Another group of interviewed “outsiders” said they did not feel discriminated against by Palmares’ residents simply because they did not pay much attention to Palmares nor had contact with Palmares’ residents.

As this group of narratives show, some “insiders” denied the existence of any type of discrimination and mentioned security and efficiency as reasons for taking some measures that might imply a different treatment from what might happen in other neighbourhoods. In the case of “outsiders”, few of them did not give relevance to what Palmares and their residents did and therefore they did not feel discriminated against.

c) The last position refers to those feeling discriminated against because of living in Palmares or not living there, respectively. There was a group of residents who expressed feeling discriminated against at the government level and also at work or at school due to living in the gated community. Samuel complained: *“The government discriminates against you because you live in Palmares. First, they want to charge you more... because they suppose you have money and it isn’t like that. I’m a professional who has worked very hard to have what I have and I’m still working hard to maintain this. I’m not a millionaire”*. Alejandra commented on her experience: *“I’ve been working for seven years as a teacher in a state primary school and since I moved to Palmares if I complain or say something the headteacher of my school tells me I should stay at home and leave the post to others... I’ve felt discriminated against in my place of work... I can only think this is because of envy. I can’t see any other reason”*<sup>108</sup>. Residents referred to a set of negative feelings such as envy and resentment against them because they lived in this type of residential settlement: *“There is like a prejudice towards people who live in Palmares. They think that because you live in Palmares you have an impressive income and this is a myth... and it’s also a resentment of some groups... If you say that you live in Palmares you’re classified as having an excellent economic situation and maybe it’s not like that; nobody knows my private life and the sacrifice I’ve made to have this...”* (Celina). For Carina: *“Those who live in “La Estanzuela” must feel a terrible resentment against Palmares, but that’s understandable because they*

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<sup>108</sup> See Roitman (2005a: 316) and Roitman (2006: 125).

*feel it for everybody... There is such separation in this damned society!''*. Víctor remarked that one disadvantage of living in gated communities, especially for children, could be *“a sort of discrimination of those who don't live in a gated community towards those who do... My kid would go tomorrow to school and somebody would say to him: ‘Do you think you're better because you live in a gated community?’”*.

People who lived in Palmares were not the only ones who felt discriminated against. Non-residents also did it. The interviewed security personnel working in Palmares felt comfortable with their work. However, there had been occasional situations in which some guards had felt discriminated against. Horacio, a security guard, commented his experience: *“A resident put me down once; according to that resident, they [residents] paid our salaries and we were their slaves... I could have told the chief of security about this event, but unfortunately residents put the dosh for us!”*. Nicanor, the security chief, did not refer to discrimination, but cultural differences: *“The cultural difference between the guards and the residents is huge... the guards feel intimidated by all that wealth and ostentation and sometimes they don't even dare talk to some residents”*.

These narratives about discrimination indicate that people in both groups, residents and non-residents alike, claimed having felt discriminated against due to either living in a gated community or not living there respectively. In this sense, all three groups show that there are two groups: discriminator and discriminated against and it is difficult to establish who is who. However, this is the richness of the narratives that they show diverse viewpoints. Regardless of who the discriminator is, it seems that these viewpoints about the other social group influence social relations between “insiders” and “outsiders” and, therefore, they might encourage urban social group segregation. They also point out the existence of a social divide.

### **6.3. Conclusions**

This chapter explored values, feelings, attitudes and knowledge held by social actors and expressed as their viewpoints. These referred to living in gated communities and whether the latter produce or make social differences noticeable or not. Viewpoints show that “insiders”, “outsides” and “other sources” are heterogeneous groups since

there are different positions within each group. However, “outsiders” were more diverse than “insiders” since they included more diverse social and economic positions. Moreover, “other sources” were not as diverse as “outsiders”.

Getting security as well as acquiring a higher social status and exclusivity were expressed as the most relevant reasons for living in gated communities. The first one appeared as the easiest reason to justify living in these closed settlements, whilst the second reason was hidden in the narratives, as something known by most social actors, but not recognised as their own motive. There were varied opinions amongst residents and non-residents about the exclusivity of Palmares.

Most interviewed social actors agreed on the future increase in the number of gated communities in Mendoza. However, their multiplication would probably mean that they would become a housing option for a more diverse target population. Therefore, it might be relevant to ask to what extent this increase of gated communities would mean that social differences would become more evident in the city. But also, if the target population is enlarged, they would not be associated with a particular social group. It is also worth noting that according to interviewees, although gated communities could make social differences more visible in the city, they did not produce them.

Life in gated communities seems to have effects on how social relations between residents and non-residents develop. This is one of the reasons for “insiders” to avoid giving their real addresses and constantly emphasising that they are not an affluent group of citizens, but just part of the middle classes. Nevertheless, most “outsiders”, with the exception of “Altos de la Puntilla”’s residents, thought there were big social differences between them and Palmares’ residents. Experiences of discrimination appeared in both social groups for living or not living in the gated community.

The narratives analysed in this chapter allow for an understanding of the general viewpoints of one group about the other. Although there were several opinions, it could be said that viewpoints of “outsiders” about “insiders” were mainly positive, although there were a few members of the outside communities who had very strong negative views about Palmares’ residents. There were also opinions of indifference

about the latter. Conversely, most residents thought that “outsiders” had negative viewpoints about “insiders” and this made them also had negative opinions about people living outside the gates. These general viewpoints are further analysed in Chapters 7 and 8.

The examination of the viewpoints (subjective elements) about social differences and living in gated communities analysed in this chapter are significant in relation to urban social group segregation. They help to understand the reasons why “insiders” might try to separate themselves from “outsiders”. These issues are part of the viewpoints referred in the theoretical proposition of the thesis that sustains that urban social group segregation is influenced by the “insiders” viewpoints and their “neighbouring social practices”.

**CHAPTER 7:**  
**NEIGHBOURING SOCIAL PRACTICES AND VIEWPOINTS:**  
**ANALYSIS OF PRACTICES CONDITIONED**  
**BY THE GATED COMMUNITY**

**Introduction**

This chapter examines the linkage between urban social group segregation and gated communities through the analysis of a first group of “neighbouring social practices” carried out by gated communities’ residents. It considers how “insiders” carry out these practices and their related viewpoints and also their viewpoints about the social groups living in the surrounding communities. “Neighbouring social practices”, as elaborated in Chapter 3, are defined as regular, conscious, recognised and collective actions performed by all social groups living in spatial proximity according to their interests and needs. These “neighbouring social practices” are expected to contribute to social interactions, understood as direct interchanges of communication, experiences, viewpoints and activities between individuals and groups, amongst different social groups as part of urban life dynamics. However, these social practices do not always lead to social interactions. They might also lead to the lack of social interactions, which is considered in this thesis as urban social group segregation. It might also be the case that social interactions do not take place, but are prompted to happen because both social groups use the same facilities and therefore there is non-segregation. The analysis of “neighbouring social practices” and viewpoints will give answers to the research questions and support or contradict the theoretical proposition of this thesis elaborated in Chapter 3. The latter suggests that “neighbouring social practices” encourage intended urban social group segregation by gated communities’ residents justified by their viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community.

A set of “neighbouring social practices” was suggested in Chapter 3. It includes ten ideal types of practices carried out by gated communities’ residents and their related viewpoints. The latter are divided into general and particular. General viewpoints refer to how one social group perceives the other. For the purpose of the thesis they are considered as positive or negative and they influence all “neighbouring social practices”. They are analysed in detail with the first examined practice. Particular

viewpoints refer to specific views about each practice, such as opinions on the use of security devices or the reasons for doing charity work. They justify why a practice is performed in a particular form and not differently. Viewpoints determine whether the outcomes of "neighbouring social practices" are intended or unintended.

The ten ideal types of "neighbouring social practices" proposed for the thesis were selected on the basis of knowledge of the situation of gated communities in Mendoza, the findings from a pilot study done in 2002 and the reviewed literature, as explained in Chapter 3. For the purposes of the analysis, these ideal types have been divided into two groups: Group A (analysed in this chapter) comprises those practices originated by the gated community itself and influenced by its attributes, such as the closed perimeter, security devices, code of conduct, residents' association, inside services and amenities and the social differences between inside and outside the settlement. Group B (analysed in Chapter 8) includes social practices related to urban life in general and are carried out by most citizens, who as a result of developing these practices might interact with members of other social groups living in spatial proximity.

The social practices considered in Group A are: 1) use of public space with restricted access; 2) institutional communication between inside and outside communities; 3) charity work benefiting the outside poor communities; and 4) job provision for outside communities. These four practices are determined by the gated community's attributes: the use of public space relates to the existence of a closed perimeter, security devices and a code of conduct that justifies how the access procedure is done; institutional communication is based on the existence of a residents' association in the gated community to deal with the institutional relations with the outside communities; the practice of charity work is related to the socio-economic level of the gated communities' residents and the social differences between inside and outside; the last practice is related to the services provided inside the gated community, which requires low-skilled workers, such as security guards. These practices are related to existing or potential problems or conflicts between the gated community's residents and the outside local communities. All these four social practices would not exist without the existence of the gated community. Since these practices are directly related to the gated community's attributes, they would sustain

or contradict the theoretical proposition of the thesis that argues that these attributes are some of the explanatory elements of the process of urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents.

These practices are performed by and explained from the perspective of the gated community's residents, and complemented by the practices and viewpoints of "outsiders". However, practices 2 and 4 constitute exceptions because the emphasis is on the opinions given by "outsiders". The reason for this is that these two social practices are actually not preformed, as explained later in this chapter, and this is mostly felt as a problem by "outsiders" rather than by "insiders". The four ideal types of "neighbouring social practices" discussed in this chapter are examined according to the information gathered during the field research. Some practices allow a more detailed analysis than others because they appear to be more relevant for the interviewed social actors, and therefore were discussed by them more extensively; these include the use of the public space inside Palmares, which is the first analysed practice.

### **7.1. Practice 1: Use of public space with restricted access**

Public space is the space occupied by public streets, squares and communal gardens. This "neighbouring social practice" examines the use of the space located inside the gated community by its residents, questioning whether it can be really considered public space. It also considers the use of this space by "outsiders" to see whether there are social interactions between these social groups or not. Viewpoints related to this practice help to understand how the practice is carried out and whether its result is intended or unintended. General viewpoints of "insiders" about "outsiders", which influence all ten "neighbouring social practices" considered in this thesis, are examined in a more detailed form for this practice than for the other practices because they are presented here for the first time.

According to the ideal type proposed for this practice in Chapter 3, it is expected that members of different social groups would be able to use freely the public space defined by their territories and consequently interact among themselves. However, the existence of a gated community could mean that the public space inside this settlement either remains public or is appropriated by its residents. It could also be



that although space inside the gated community continues to be officially for public use, its use is restricted due to the security devices of the settlement. Therefore, although social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" might be expected, this "neighbouring social practice" might not contribute to it due to the features of the gated community. This practice is related to the closed perimeter, the code of conduct and the restricted access, which are three of the most distinguishable attributes of gated communities. It is important to analyse them in relation to their contribution or not to intended urban social group segregation, as suggested by the theoretical proposition of the research, and also consider the viewpoints about them.

Palmares is a gated community that unlike other similar settlements in Mendoza has been legally approved through by-laws, as explained in Chapter 5. According to these regulations, Palmares' streets are public, but the vehicular and pedestrian access to the gated community is restricted<sup>109</sup>. A.Pro.CUP., Palmares' homeowners' association, has the legal right to decide who is allowed or not to enter Palmares. Squares and communal gardens are not public spaces because they are located on land owned by "Presidente", the company that built the gated community. They can only be used by its residents or authorised guests.

Joaquín, a security guard, described in detail the access procedure followed according to the code of conduct for non-residents to enable them to enter the gated community: *"When the visitor arrives at the entrance, you phone the resident that person wants to visit. If the phone line is busy, then you have to go to the house. Sometimes people complain because they have to wait more than the normal time. Then you explain the reasons for the delay and you apologise and say that it won't happen again. When the resident gives authorisation for the visitor to enter, you register that in a book, with the guest's name, type of vehicle, plate number and it's also recorded by the CCTV... It's different with workers: when a new house starts being built, workers get an ID with the photocopy of the national identity card and you give them a number and everything is registered in a book. You have to register all the tools they bring in; however, tools can only be taken out from the gated*

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<sup>109</sup> This information, as well as other provided later in this and the next chapters, has already been given in previous chapters. However, repetitions are needed to emphasise particular points relevant to social practices and viewpoints.

*community by the builders' supervisor... Home-helpers need to bring their national identity cards and their working schedules are registered... Workers know the working conditions so they know we'll also check them when they go out...".* There were a handful of service providers who had been authorised to enter the settlement on a regular basis, like the baker, greengrocers, newspapers delivery person and florist. Ambulance, fire-fighters and police services could enter at any time.

"Insiders" gave their experiences about how the access procedure is carried out: *"The guards have a list of guests that a person receives on a regular basis. Then, it wouldn't be necessary that they call you to ask if they're allowed to enter every time they come, like my uncle. He comes every Sunday and they call every Sunday and ask if he can get into... however, there is the guest list... they should have a look at it more often..."* (Gerardo). Rosario justified the restricted access: *"I understand that people who come to visit you don't like having to spend a little while waiting at the entrance for you to be phoned or to be accompanied by a guard up to my house. But the more security there is, the more relaxed I am".*

Some residents commented that before living there, they tried to enter the gated community, but were not allowed: *"Once I wanted to enter the neighbourhood to see a plot and wasn't allowed to enter... I didn't enter...I was annoyed, but I also liked it"* (Victor). Rodrigo had a similar experience: *"I wasn't allowed to see a plot inside and felt discriminated against because the guard said: 'No, without authorisation and if you don't know anybody inside here you can't enter'".* Other residents mentioned they had some problems with their families and friends because of the restricted access: *"My wife and I sometimes feel bad because when our friends or relatives come to visit us they say: 'Look, if you don't authorise me to enter straight away without the guard having to phone you, I'm not coming anymore' ... and I can do that, I can say: 'Allow my mum, my sister and my aunt to get inside always, without phoning me'. And the guard should do that... but in the end, they phone us anyway..."* (Gastón).

The restriction for non-residents to freely access Palmares created a conflict with the outside communities. Some "outsiders" wanted to get access to Palmares, as later explained in the analysis of Practice 2, and were not allowed to enter. Security

guards are in charge of deterring access to non-authorised people, as Jorge, one of the guards, said: *"We always have people who want to enter without being authorised... You can explain to some people that there is a code of conduct and they understand this, but others swear at you and so you feel like sending everything to hell"*.

Gabriel, who lived in "Fuchs", commented on his experience: *"I tried to enter Palmares. I pretended to be a tourist and I made up that I came from Buenos Aires... But they didn't allow me in...because to enter, even if you want to see a plot, you need an appointment. What they did was unconstitutional according to article 14 of the National Constitution. It could be considered as discrimination. I went with my girlfriend and said I wanted to see a plot and a guy told me: 'No, you can only see it if you have already the deeds or the documents saying that you have bought it'. Then, my logical answer was: 'How can I buy something that I can't see?' It was obvious that I was making everything up. Then I had two options: swear at the guy and not enter; or be cool and relaxed and not enter. Entering wasn't the third option. I just took everything as something fun. It was a very elegant way of discrimination. It isn't discrimination against a particular person, but against a particular group. Probably if I'd go in another car, with different clothes and have a different surname, or I had another reason to enter or gave another excuse, I could have entered"*. This experience shows the obstacles faced by non-residents if they wanted to enter Palmares and also emphasises social differences between "insiders" and "outsiders".

In 2003, A.Pro.CUP. thought about intensifying the control to guests, checking inside vehicles when they were leaving the neighbourhood. However, residents did not agree on this: *"It's an extreme measure... This isn't an embassy to be controlled like that... I think it's pointless... because then they'll have to control all of us [the residents] because I could be assaulted outside and obliged to bring some guys hidden in the boot of my car and nobody would realise about it..."* (Inés, 34-year-old architect). Despite the security measures, residents were conscious that if a group of people wanted to enter by force, they could easily do it: *"The restricted access is the advantage of gated communities; however, I think that if people don't force the access it's out of respect, because in fact if someone would like to enter by force s/he could do it..."* (José). Having explained how the access to Palmares is conducted,

the next sub-sections analyses the different use of the public space by "insiders", according to age and gender, and also by "outsiders".

#### **7.1.1. Use of public space with restricted access by “insiders”**

Adult residents used the streets of Palmares mainly for walking and jogging, especially during evening time. Marisa compared her life in Palmares with her life in her former house in an “open neighbourhood” and commented how she used the public space inside: *“My life has changed because when you sleep well at night, you feel better during the day... I’m generally very fearful, but I’m safe here in Palmares. It’s a place where I can go for a walk or do activities that I couldn’t do before. I couldn’t do these when I lived in an ‘open neighbourhood’ because of my working schedule. I would arrive in my former house and stay inside. I couldn’t go out and here I can go for a walk at night, at any time, even at dawn if I want. At the end of the day, everything is around security! In my non-working days I enjoy staying in the neighbourhood so much. It’s really a pleasure!”*.

Adult men also used the streets of Palmares. Esteban compared his life before and after coming to live in the gated community: *“Before moving to Palmares, I went to the park<sup>110</sup> for jogging very often, nearly everyday, and now I jog here inside... Sometimes I go back to the park, just because it’s a nice place and I miss it... Many times I go jogging at night here in the neighbourhood. It’s great and you can do it here because you have security”*. Rodrigo also said he used the streets of Palmares for *“walking, jogging, riding my motorbike and cycling”*.

Teenagers used the streets for cycling or driving their four-tracks: *“We usually go cycling in the neighbourhood and also ride the fourtracks... but sometimes old people complain about this because they say we’re very noisy and then the guards stop us and take the keys of the fourtracks... Sometimes we go with the fourtracks to a place in the third stage of the neighbourhood where it’s like hills and it’s great”* (Gregorio).

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<sup>110</sup> “The park” is the biggest park in MAM called “Parque General San Martín”.

It is possible to see children playing on the pavements, riding bicycles and also driving fourtracks, although they are under-aged for this last activity. Their parents commented on the use of the public space inside the gated community: *"I usually go for a stroll with my kids in the afternoon... they also ride their bikes... It would be good to have a playground for children inside the neighbourhood... It's very strange for me to see eight-year-old children driving fourtracks. They're very small for that. They're in the age of bikes and skates... They'll have time for that when they're older... It must be that I was brought up differently..."* (Adela). Other adults also mentioned their experiences: *"One of the reasons why we moved here is that children can be independent. They can ride their bikes and be on the streets. They can live in a more relaxed way and so can we! We're so happy here. My kids ride their bikes and scooters, and stay outside on the streets... They go from one place to another inside the neighbourhood. They can do whatever they want... They drive the fourtracks... Before moving here we lived in the city centre and they had to be inside the house all the time... Watching TV and playing with the computer were the only options for them"* (Carolina). These narratives indicate that all age groups and both men and women used the public space of Palmares, which mainly referred to the streets of the settlement, to play with friends or to practise sports. However, the use of this space was restricted through the controlled access.

The barrier that needs to be crossed to enter Palmares is one of the most visible security devices to control the access. "Insiders" expressed their feelings and opinions about the barrier. Their viewpoints did not vary according to gender, but according to age. In the case of teenagers and young residents, they mentioned negative feelings in relation to crossing the barrier to enter the gated community<sup>111</sup>. Constanza felt *"freedom"* when going out of the settlement because *"it isn't like I feel in prison, but it's annoying to see that the guards are all the time watching what you do"*. Lionel did not like the barrier because *"it's annoying... when I enter Palmares it annoys me... It's a weird feeling..."*. Fernando expressed: *"It feels like a prison... It's like a created micro-environment... You feel like surrounded by four*

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<sup>111</sup> As previously explained in Chapter 4, particular viewpoints are treated in the thesis in a simplified way to allow for an understanding and explanation on how and why people performed their "neighbouring social practices". The same happens with the general viewpoints about the other social group. As the tables for the "ideal types" show, responses are treated in a dichotomic form although it is acknowledged that reality is richer.

walls...; but, on the other hand, it gives you security... It has pros and cons... ". This last opinion shows the combination of feelings residents have regarding the barrier. On the one hand, there is imprisonment; and, on the other hand, security because they are inside the gated community. Gregorio added about the barrier: *"You need to be with your eyes open when you cross the barrier because you find another reality outside, different from the one of the gated communities which is the exception... It's a psychological issue when you go out and cross the barrier because you say: 'I have to go out and face what reality is about'. Because here inside you get used to being relaxed, to leaving doors unlocked, you forget about the vehicular transit... and then you need to be careful because you have the risk of staying inside the bubble and you think that everybody lives like in Palmares and it isn't like that... It's shocking, but that's why you need to go out and say: 'This is the reality'".*

While young residents had mostly negative viewpoints about the barrier, both adult women and men had positive viewpoints. The barrier was associated with having security and feeling relaxed: *"When I moved to Palmares my life changed because I feel more secure now... When I cross the barrier I feel relaxed, I don't feel that I have to look around to see if there's something dangerous"* (Celina). Lidia (59-year-old company-owner, Palmares' resident) gave her opinion about the restricted access to the gated community: *"One thing that annoys me a bit is this restriction to enter... Well, it doesn't annoy me, but it does some people... Non-residents say they can't get used to having a barrier at the entrance... I don't really care about it because I think it's like entering a building where you have an entry-phone and you have to say who you are..."*. Her opinion reflects the contradictions that appeared in some of the residents' opinions about not liking the restricted access or the excessive surveillance or mentioning this as something that might not be accepted, but at the same time, demanding more security, as seen in Chapter 5.

Men had similar experiences to women's, and different ones to teenagers': *"It's a weird feeling, but I like it. I feel relaxed not only when entering, but also when leaving... I can't explain it... It makes you feel good maybe because of the security issue... And you have the guard who greets you. It's important; he's watching your*

movements...” (Gastón)<sup>112</sup>. Miguel said he felt “*security at all times. I know that nobody is going to enter...*” and pointed out the two situations the barrier separates: “*tranquillity when entering: ‘uff, I have arrived!’; and facing ‘the normal’, ‘that thing from what you can’t isolate yourself from’ when I’m going out*”. Esteban added: “*When I enter I say: ‘Tranquillity!, I’m at home, I’m going to rest’, I can be relaxed because I’m finishing my working day... then it’s a satisfaction. And when I go out, I go out to do my errands, my business, I have no feelings. It’s like if I go out from a neighbourhood that isn’t closed... I’m going to work and that’s it*”. According to these opinions, both men and women related the barrier to the feeling of being at home and safe and marked the contrast between an inside protected world and the outside unsecure world. However, this implicitly means that they were protecting themselves from the “outside world”, and thus, they were pointing out the social differences between “insiders” and “outsiders”. Rodrigo made this differentiation between inside and outside residents clear: “*When I arrive at the neighbourhood, when I cross the barrier, it’s like if I’m arriving in California... I lived in California before... It’s like I were suddenly entering California because there is tranquillity, palm trees, another world... and when I go out... I feel the opposite... I say to myself: ‘I’m in the Bronx [sic] again’ and I have to go back to the Bronx codes*”. According to Palmares’ residents, the barrier was not explicitly related to social differences between “insiders” and “outsiders” and the need to demarcate differences in the territory, but to urban insecurity. This is perceived differently in the case of non-residents, as elaborated later in the next sub-section, because “outsiders” made explicit the link between social differences and use of security devices in the gated community.

Following the ideal types suggested for all practices, it is not only important to consider the particular viewpoints given by social actors about each practice, but also the general viewpoints that refer to how “insiders” perceived “outsiders”. Both types of viewpoints influence the social practice and its outcome. When Palmares residents were asked about their knowledge, opinions and relationships with the outside communities, they provided different responses. The majority referred only to the surrounding poor community, without considering the middle-class neighbourhoods

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<sup>112</sup> See Roitman (2008b: 6).

around them: *"I don't like the surrounding area because it's so poor... There are several slums around the highway"<sup>113</sup> ... There are some neighbourhoods bordering the highway where hopefully you won't get a puncture, because they would eat you like ants... This is one of the few cons of the gated community. I considered this when deciding whether to move to Palmares or not, but I think it's just a transit area close to the highway, just that"* (Rodrigo). When asked about his opinion on the fact that the outside surrounding communities might feel discriminated against due to the security devices of Palmares, Rodrigo added: *"Yes, because of the barbed wire and the security guards... But if we don't put these, what am I protecting myself from? I'm protecting me and my family from the surrounding poor neighbourhoods"*. Other residents also considered the surrounding area in a negative way: *"The surroundings aren't the best ones"* (Miguel); *"We're heavily surrounded by marginal neighbourhoods... slums... I think they're quite dangerous... This isn't a village or a unique isolated neighbourhood; we're surrounded by all that happens in everyday life"* (Rebeca).

José provided an explanation to the mushrooming of poor settlements in the area: *"Towards the north-west the surrounding area tends to be more worrying because there are more poor settlements and the demographic density of poor and marginal families in the area is increasing... I guess the provincial housing policy might be encouraging this..."*. Celina gave her justification of the phenomenon: *"You have surrounding areas of very low socio-economic level which are dangerous... Many gated communities have usually this problem with the surroundings, but that's inevitable for some kind of urban reason because gated communities are located in the periphery and it's also in the periphery that people who can't have access to the city centre are located ... You can see this in many cities..."*.

Residents sometimes mentioned a relation between having a surrounding poor community and having more possibilities of being robbed: *"There are neighbourhoods crossing the highway that can breed robberies"* (Amadeo). Nevertheless, they mentioned feeling safe and protected within the boundaries of the

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<sup>113</sup> Palmares' residents need to drive over 200 metres by the side of "La Estanzuela", a social housing estate on the other side of "Corredor del Oeste" Highway, when leaving or entering the neighbourhood to be able to take the highway.



gated community and therefore not being worried about having hostile neighbourhoods close to them: *"I'm not worried about the surroundings because I think Palmares has enough security, which is the only thing we're interested in..."* (Marisol).

María pointed out the social differences between Palmares and its surrounding areas, which she described as *"contrasting"* because *"there isn't the same quality of construction around here as in Palmares... We can't ignore the surrounding poor neighbourhoods... It isn't nice. It isn't that I don't like seeing them because they're annoying, but on the contrary, my heart is broken when I see people living like that... and when I see myself at the other extreme... But well it isn't in my hands to do anything..."*. Alvaro added: *"Unfortunately we have many poor or marginal neighbourhoods... They don't give us problems, but the contrast is big... It isn't that they annoy me, but I'd like them to improve or that the municipality would do something to improve the living conditions of those neighbourhoods for the surroundings to be more homogeneous"*.

Previous opinions provided by "insiders" about the outside communities were mainly negative since "outsiders" were considered as poor, dangerous and located at the other pole of the social structure. Nevertheless, as presented in Chapter 5, the outside communities did not constitute a homogeneous group in relation to their socio-economic levels. They ranged from poor groups ("Urundel"'s residents) to upper-middle class residents (those living in "Altos de la Puntilla"). Some Palmares' residents were able to recognise the existing social differences within the surrounding communities and considered them as different social groups: *"You have all the quotas outside Palmares... There is a poor neighbourhood... quite large... you have a working-middle class neighbourhood, you have the shopping centre... and you have on the other side a gated community<sup>114</sup> of a lower socio-economic level than Palmares..."* (Edgardo). Graciela mentioned two contrasting neighbourhoods located outside: *"We have "Fuchs", that is a normal neighbourhood... and "La Estanzuela"<sup>115</sup> where not even the police enters..."*. Lidia added: *"Fuchs" is a nice neighbourhood... towards the west side the outside neighbourhoods aren't so nice"*.

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<sup>114</sup> See footnote 58, Chapter 5.

<sup>115</sup> See footnote 71, Chapter 5.

These expressions denote that some residents were aware of the existence of different social groups living outside Palmares. However, these opinions came from only a minority of “insiders”.

Most Palmares’ residents did not consider the surroundings of the gated community as a relevant criterion to be taken into account when deciding where to live. This could be seen in a positive light considering that they did not deem the outside neighbourhoods as hostile or a threat to themselves. However, after moving to the gated community most residents developed negative viewpoints about the outside local communities. Although it is difficult to generalise and it could be considered a simplistic approach, it is necessary to establish a general conclusion about whether the predominant perception of “insiders” about “outsiders” was negative or positive. Therefore, considering that the reference to “outsiders” was most frequently negative with the view that most “outsiders” were poor and dangerous, combined with ignorance of the existence of other social groups, it has to be concluded that these general viewpoints of “insiders” about “outsiders” are mainly negative. These general viewpoints are applicable to all “neighbouring social practices” analysed in this chapter and in Chapter 8. They are not considered in detail for the other social practices since they have already been analysed in this section, but they are a significant element that influences all social practices and might encourage urban social group segregation.

This sub-section explained how residents used the public space inside Palmares, with security looming large as an element behind the practice and justifying why residents preferred to stay inside and use the public space inside. Residents did not particularly consider the use of the inside space as a practice that could encourage social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders” and were agreed on having a restricted access, although the inside space is legally public. Nobody questioned the appropriation of this public space made by the gated community. The next sub-section explores whether some “outsiders” had had the opportunity to visit Palmares and use its public space.

### 7.1.2. Access to and use of public space with restricted access by “outsiders”

Narratives in previous sections indicated that “outsiders” were not allowed freely to enter Palmares. This sub-section tries to identify whether there were some members of the outside local communities that despite this restriction had been able to use the public space inside the gated community and also further explores the viewpoints of “outsiders” about the controlled access.

Upon examination of whether “outsiders” had been inside Palmares or not, a clear difference emerged based on the socio-economic levels of “outsiders”. All interviewed residents from “Altos de la Puntilla”, inhabited by upper-middle and middle-class residents, had been inside Palmares. Conversely, only two interviewed residents from “Urundel”, the poorest neighbourhood, had been there and only once to do a particular job. None of the interviewed “outsiders” had used Palmares’ streets for cycling, jogging or walking, although these are public.

One third of all interviewed members of the outside surrounding communities had never been inside Palmares. They all said they *“would love to enter”* to look at the settlement from inside, but they knew access was not granted to non-residents. Lucas, who was the president of “Urundel” residents’ association, said: *“I haven’t had the chance to get into Palmares. I know it just from the outside. I think it’s very pretty, but I’d like to visit it and see it. I believe it must be really nice inside”*.

The other two-thirds of the interviewed “outsiders” had been in Palmares only once or twice. Flavia and Amanda (from “Altos de la Puntilla”) and Leopoldo (from “Fuchs”) had been inside because they had acquaintances living there: *“I’ve been inside twice to visit people I know. But I have to announce myself at the entrance...”* (Leopoldo). This announcement refers to the procedure already explained that must be followed when a guest wants to get access to Palmares. Rosa, who lived in “Fuchs”, and Cristóbal, from “Obras Sanitarias”, entered once to complain about some works done in Palmares that were causing problems to them, such as the cutting of hills to level land. Lorna (from “Altos de la Puntilla”) and her husband entered to see plots and houses on sale because they wanted to buy a property in Palmares. Mónica and Griselda (both residents of “Obras Sanitarias”) entered once or twice to pick up their kids from their friends’ houses. Catalina, from “Urundel”, worked for a day on a trial basis as a cleaner. Marcos, who also lived in “Urundel”,

was a mechanic who entered once to repair a construction machine. Armando, an engineer who lived in “Altos de la Puntilla”, constituted an exception because he was working in Palmares and therefore he had been inside the gated community on a regular basis.

Although security devices did not allow them to enter Palmares, most members of the outside communities, regardless of their socio-economic level, were in favour of their implementation and justified them on the basis of having security in the gated community. Leopoldo commented on about the wall: *“It doesn’t produce any feeling in me. I know that a gated community has to be closed. The difference is between those who live on one side and those who live on the other side. I’d love to live on the other side, but I don’t have the means to live there. I have to accept that a gated community has to be closed, otherwise it isn’t a gated community... If it’s not closed, it’s vulnerable...”*<sup>116</sup>. He added about the relationship between “Fuchs” and Palmares: *“We as a neighbourhood don’t have any relationship with Palmares. They don’t want to have it with us!”* Mónica provided a similar explanation justifying the closure of the gated community: *“I think Palmares’ residents have to have more security because they’ve paid a different house price for that... and the wall is like the back of any other house, it’s nothing especial”*. Lorna gave a more elaborate explanation on her perception about the wall: *“The wall gives me the feelings of ‘watch out’, ‘this is under surveillance’, of respect..., of ‘not everybody can enter here’..., and of ‘people who are inside are safe and protected’. These are the messages that I’d pretend that everybody living outside would have if I were living inside. These are the feelings that the wall gives me according to my social condition... maybe it might be violent for other people or can trigger other feelings. I’m giving my opinion considering that I’d like to live there, if I could afford it...”*.

A minority of the outside residents interviewed referred to the wall as an instrument that made social differences more explicit. Gabriel said that in the beginning, when the wall was built, he felt “angry” because of “the need to mark the difference” and that it was “shocking to have a two-metre wall and a guy on the other side looking with a face of ‘what are you gonna do to me?’... It was like medieval castles with the

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<sup>116</sup> See Roitman (2008b: 7).

*wall and those who are left outside are defenceless... But I think the wall is more shocking when you're inside... because it's always a minority inside, otherwise the wall wouldn't have a purpose... We would all be inside. Therefore, I prefer not to be one of the selected minority inside the wall because of fear of the majority, but to be one of the majority... and well, if that makes people happy, it's fine for them...".* To Lucía the wall *"wants to separate and distinguish Palmares from the rest of the surrounding neighbourhoods... But it doesn't affect me a lot because I don't feel discriminated against..."*. Gema gave this opinion: *"I have the feeling they belong to an elite class and it's very difficult to get in... It's a special group and they go slowly isolating themselves and marking differences"*<sup>117</sup>. Most of these opinions denote that "outsiders" saw "insiders" as a social group different from the outside communities and not interested in interacting with them. They also evidenced that some "outsiders" clearly associated the use of security devices with reinforcing social differences between inside and outside the gated community. On the contrary, as explained earlier, "insiders" did not make this link explicit.

The opinions presented in this section about the use of the public space by "insiders" and "outsiders" show that only "insiders" used the public space within Palmares. There were few cases of interviewed "outsiders" who had been inside the gated community. This was related to their socio-economic level: while all interviewees from "Altos de la Puntilla", the upper-middle and middle-class neighbourhood, had been inside as guests or workers, less than half of the people living in "Urundel", the informal settlement, had been inside only once to do a particular job. But more importantly, due to the restricted access to Palmares, no outsider had used the inside streets for walking, jogging or cycling. Security devices were very strict and deterred access to non-residents. This means that this social practice does not facilitate social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders". There are several factors influencing this practice. The most important one is the implementation of security devices that characterise the gated community and constitute one of its main attributes. The existence of a close perimeter and a code of conduct are also attributes that discourage the use of the public space inside by non-residents. The most relevant structural elements that influence this practice are insecurity and increasing urban

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<sup>117</sup> See Roitman (2008b: 7).

inequalities. High crime rates and fear of crime in MAM have intensified the use of security devices. Although it is not always considered as positive, most residents agreed on the use of security devices because they made them feel more protected. Rules about access were observed by all actors (residents and non-residents) involved and implied that non-residents were not allowed to enter Palmares and use its public space and therefore social interactions were not possible.

There are also individual elements that influenced this social practice since residents respected these rules and agreed on them on the basis of having more security inside the gated community. All interviewed women, men, teenagers and children living in Palmares used the public space inside. The particular viewpoints about this practice played a significant role in explaining its outcome. Residents did not consider the use of public space as discouraging social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders". They justified the use of the security devices and sometimes demanded stronger measures, as shown in Chapter 6. However, viewpoints about security devices varied according to the residents' age. Although all residents agreed on the importance of security devices, teenagers and young residents felt imprisoned in the gated community, while adults felt more relaxed. In relation to the general viewpoints of "insiders" about "outsiders", most Palmares' residents considered "outsiders" across the board as poor and dangerous communities and consequently in a negative way. Only a few "insiders" could recognise the existence of diverse neighbourhoods.

Non-residents also respected the rules about access, even if they did not agree on them. Most of them agreed on the relevance of the gated community's security devices and justified the controlled access on this basis. Nevertheless, "outsiders", except from those living in "Altos de la Puntilla", pointed out the social differences between them and "insiders" as an explanation for the lack of social interaction between these social groups.

As shown in this section, the controlled access through the use of security devices played a key role in this practice since it did not allow non-residents to use the inside public space, which became restricted space. This is the reason why this practice is called "use of public space with restricted access" in this chapter and not only "use of

public space” as suggested by the ideal type in Chapter 3. This is a more appropriate name that takes into account the whole nature of the practice and the influence of this attribute of the gated community.

Following the “ideal type” (summarised in Table 7.1), the narratives provided in this section implied that the use of public space with restricted access is only performed by “insiders” and therefore there are no social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders”. This contributes to urban social group segregation. The analysis of the viewpoints related to this practice, especially the security devices, evidenced that the barrier was perceived by “insiders” mainly as a security device that marked the limits of the safe area (neighbourhood and house) on one side, and the unsafe area (the “outside world”) on the other side. The barrier was used as a protection tool and this was accepted and justified by both “insiders” and “outsiders”. However, security devices appeared also as instruments to evidence existing social differences between social groups. This was explicitly recognised by “outsiders” and implicitly mentioned by “insiders”. These particular viewpoints, along with the general viewpoints of “insiders” about “outsiders”, need to be considered to determine whether the outcome of this practice is intended or unintended.

**Table 7.1 (4.1): Use of public space with restricted access**

Viewpoints	Social practice Use of public space with restricted access	
	Used by both groups	Used by only one group
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	<b>Intended segregation (D)</b>

Although there are very different general and particular viewpoints, it could be considered that there is a more significant trend towards negative than positive viewpoints in relation to this practice. Social differences, negative opinions about “outsiders” and the need to protect themselves from the “outside world” and the justification of a restricted access to the settlement appeared as more frequent viewpoints. Therefore, following Table 7.1, the use of public space with restricted access contributes to **intended urban social group segregation** (Cell D) since the public space inside the gated community is used only by one social group and the majority of viewpoints are negative. Considering this result, this practice **supports**

**the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since the use of public space with restricted access encourages intended urban social group segregation and is evidenced by the negative viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community; the latter are mainly the security devices used, the closed perimeter and the restrictions to access the residential settlement, according to the code of conduct.

## **7.2. Practice 2: Institutional communication between inside and outside communities**

This social practice refers to how the gated community's residents and the outside residents as collective actors, represented by their institutional organisations, relate to each other. The first step in the analysis of this practice, as explained in Chapter 3, consists in identifying the existence or not of collective relationships between the neighbourhoods – for instance conflicts or common interests. Later, how these relations have developed is examined to see whether there have or not been processes of institutional communications. The latter are considered as formal and informal. Whilst formal refers to communications established by letters and meetings, informal communications refer to occasional visits or phone calls between neighbourhoods to discuss common interests or problems. Most of these relationships between "insiders" and "outsiders" are related to conflict resolution. The relevance of this practice for the thesis lies in identifying whether citizens living in a gated community have social interactions with residents living in spatial proximity when they have to discuss common issues, solve mutual problems or even organise joint events for the local area. These are situations that might naturally develop between neighbourhoods contributing to social interactions. On the contrary, the inexistence of institutional communications between "insiders" and "outsiders" would mean that there are no social interactions and therefore this situation contributes to urban social group segregation, which implies the acceptance of the theoretical proposition of the thesis. However, viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community would have to be considered first in relation to the theoretical proposition.

"Insiders" and "outsiders" perceived problems affecting them very differently. Most "outsiders" complained about different issues in relation to the construction of Palmares and wanted to discuss them. Conversely, Palmares' residents were not aware of conflicts between "insiders" and "outsiders", with the exceptions of special



situations, such as the closure of the streets, as further explained in this section. For this reason, and different from most analysed "neighbouring social practices", this practice is presented from the perspective of "outsiders", and complemented by the viewpoints of "insiders".

The analysis of this practice pays special attention to members of the residents' associations because they have a crucial role in institutional communications with other neighbourhoods to discuss common interests or problems. The outside neighbourhoods, with the exception of "Altos de la Puntilla", all had a residents' association. The focus of the analysis of this practice is on how these associations communicate with Palmares' homeowners association.

The outside surrounding communities mentioned several conflicts with Palmares that affected one or more outside neighbourhoods. The four main conflicts identified were as follows: a) closure of streets; b) noises and disturbance at the service entrance; c) noises coming from the clubhouse; and d) water shortage. These are analysed according to what both parts said about them and the measures taken to solve them. The first two conflicts were more significant and consequently they are explained in more detail.

a) Streets closure, the first conflict, refers to the nature of the gated community as a closed settlement with restricted access. Since streets were public inside Palmares, several "outsiders" had tried a few times to go through the gated community when they went to the shopping centre located next to Palmares. They argued that it was a shortcut when going on foot. However, security staff from Palmares did not allow them to enter the gated community. Residents from "Obras Sanitarias" and "Fuchs" complained: *"Before Palmares was built we had a street to communicate with the supermarket located in the shopping centre; and now we have to go to San Martín Street and turn there... The municipality allowed Palmares to close that street... as if they, Palmares' residents, are the owners of everything!"* (Cristóbal). Rosa argued in relation to Palmares: *"That neighbourhood has to be a public neighbourhood due to how it's been built"*.

All Palmares' residents knew about this conflict since the opening of the streets *"could have affected our lives 100 percent"* (Graciela). It would have meant the *"destruction of the gated community"* (Edgardo) since it would not be a closed settlement any longer, houses would have to be fenced and security would have been broken. According to Marisa: *"It would be a big problem if they would open the streets to the public because these houses are designed for a gated community. For instance, in my case, you can imagine how I'd have to fence-in with all these big windows in this house... I'd have to sell the house to be able to pay for all the fences... It's impossible!"*. Amadeo complained about the precarious legal situation of Palmares: *"We were offered a private neighbourhood that never existed"* since streets were public.

Many of the gated community's residents became familiar with this legal problem only when the conflict with the outside communities appeared. They investigated the legal status of Palmares and realised that there was no national or provincial legislation on gated communities<sup>118</sup>. Therefore, they recognised the importance of having specific legislation for this type of residential settlement. For Graciela: *"It would be important to legislate on the gated communities' subject... There has been a 'boom' of these in only a few years and I think it's bad that they're still discussing the draft for the law and there is still no law! When we bought the plot, it was much more expensive than in 'open neighbourhoods'. And then they want to open the streets and it would be like 'Fuchs' and you say: 'Why on earth did I pay 10 times more for the plot?' And you want to die!... There were problems with people who wanted to go to the supermarket through these streets, but they couldn't do this before because this space was all one single closed plot and they couldn't get across... Then, you realise that it's because it annoys them that you could have something more than them"*. Some of Palmares' residents felt vulnerable: *"There was a big problem... there were some councillors who wanted to make the streets available to public access and this was very annoying... You realise that when they sold the plots, Palmares wasn't a gated community and there were still things to conclude..."* (Edgardo). Graciela's opinion is an example of those "insiders" who thought that "outsiders" were annoyed or felt resentment because of the differences

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<sup>118</sup> See Appendix A for the analysis on the legal framework of gated communities in MAM.

between Palmares and the outside neighbourhoods. However, this was not only considered in relation to “outsiders” but to the society as a whole since most residents mentioned feelings of envy and resentment in other people caused by the gated communities: *“Many people feel envy... but I start thinking ‘Why should I feel envy for someone who has more than me?’ and I wouldn’t understand it... But it does so in people who’re more violent... it produces more upset and more envy”* (Inés); and: *“They feel envy... if you say that you live in Palmares they say ‘ah!!’ or they’re surprised by the house you have”* (Julieta).

The conflict of the streets was solved by municipal by-laws stating that although streets were public, A.Pro.CUP. had the right to restrict access to Palmares, as explained in Chapter 5. This solution did not satisfy the outside communities. A.Pro.CUP. did not have any contact with the outside communities to discuss the issue. The local government acted as mediator and issued the by-laws to put an end to the conflict. There was no institutional communication since the residents’ associations of “Fuchs” and “Obras Sanitarias” did not have any contact with A.Pro.CUP. to solve this problem. This contributed to urban social group segregation since there were no social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders”.

b) The second conflict was related to the service entrance. This entrance is located on the northern side of Palmares close to “Fuchs” and “Altos de la Puntilla”, as mentioned in Chapter 5. Leopoldo, the president of “Fuchs” residents’ association, whose house was located opposite the service entrance explained the reasons for the conflict: *“Inside the gates are all the authorised workers, those who have car insurance, and the rest are outside... They all park here... This is a mess in the mornings... They block all streets with vehicles and start sounding their horns... It’s awful! And I have to put up with this, not the ones who live inside Palmares! Another detail: workers can’t be inside Palmares if they aren’t working... and then those who have to be paid wait there, in the corner outside Palmares, and they lie on the pavement. They eat and leave all the rubbish in the ‘acequias’<sup>119</sup> ... And I ask myself: ‘Why don’t they pay them inside?’ No, they can’t have people waiting inside, on the*

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<sup>119</sup> *Acequias* are small canals that carry water located between the road and the pavement. All roads in Mendoza have these canals. They are part of an irrigation system inherited from the *Huarpes* (local indigenous) that is still in use.

*streets, but I can have them because I'm not on the same level they are...".* Amanda, a resident from "Altos de la Puntilla", whose house was next to the service entrance complained: *"I have workers in my doorstep all day... and I have to put up with those who sell sandwiches and coffee to the builders... They come with loud music; workers go in and out all the time ... They leave rubbish here... It's a lot of people..."*. This woman had additional problems since her house was next to the guardhouse she could hear the guards talking and listening to music overnight.

There was not any kind of formal institutional communication by the outside neighbourhoods with Palmares to solve the conflict regarding the service entrance. "Outsiders" complained not to A.Pro.CUP., but to the developer who built Palmares and to the municipality. There were also informal complaints to the guards, made by "outsiders" by phone or personally. Rosa, one of the members of "Fuchs" residents' association, said: *"We don't have any communication with Palmares"*. She did not even know about the existence of A.Pro.CUP. and this was the reason for not having any formal communication with A.Pro.CUP. Leopoldo showed his disappointment with the local government regarding this conflict and the possibilities of solution: *"All mayors, similarly all councillors, are attached to economic power... This is a corrupt country and there is legal impunity... Nobody did a thing or said anything to 'Mr Palmares' because the power of money is greater than popular protests"*. This comment makes explicit the different power relations that exist between "insiders" and "outsiders" and the different perceptions about Palmares' residents, as analysed in Chapter 6.

In the case of "Altos de la Puntilla", as there was no residents' association, there were only individual complaints and later a collective letter to A.Pro.CUP. Amanda commented her experience: *"I go to the guardhouse and tell something to the guards or I phone and sometimes the supervisor has come to talk to me... The current security chief told me I have to address him by letter when I have a problem..."*. Armando, another resident from the same neighbourhood, said: *"We've recently submitted a letter to Palmares' residents association complaining about the mess of people coming to work every morning... We're now waiting for an answer"*. This letter was the only formal communication between the two groups of residents.

Some Palmares' residents were aware of this conflict with the outside neighbours, particularly with those living in "Fuchs" and "Altos de la Puntilla". Luisa commented on this: *"The woman who lives outside in "Altos de la Puntilla" is getting mad with all the ambulant sellers and people who come to ask for a job... Workers sit on the pavement... And the guards have the radio on all the time"*. Felipe, the president of A.Pro.CUP.<sup>120</sup>, added: *"We're going to close Tower 2, the service entrance, facing "Fuchs" because that's the entrance for workers and trucks. And we've received terrible complaints from inside and outside residents and then we'll try to install another entrance in Tower 3, which is the entrance close to Corredor del Oeste..."*. This would solve the problem for the outside communities and would not imply a problem for the inside residents. This was the situation when carrying out the field research in 2003. A visit to Palmares in April 2005 indicated that the service entrance had been moved to Tower 3, closer to the third stage of the neighbourhood that was under construction.

The solution of this conflict did not follow any formal institutional communication with the exception of a letter submitted to A.Pro.CUP. by a group of residents from "Altos de la Puntilla". Although these residents were closer in socio-economic level to Palmares' residents than the other "outsiders", it was such a small group of houses than they had a minor influence in the conflict. "Fuchs"'s residents were also facing this problem, but they did not have any contact with A.Pro.CUP. and did not even know about its existence. All complaints were made individually and informally, usually by phone calls or talking to the security staff. There was no third party intervening in the solution of this conflict. This evidences that there was no institutional communication, which contributes to the urban social group segregation by Palmares' residents because the potential social interactions that could be involved in the conflict's solution did not happen. The conflict was solved as a consequence of the development of the gated community and the convenience for Palmares to change the service entrance rather than because of the problems caused to the outside communities.

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<sup>120</sup>The authorities of A.Pro.CUP. changed whilst the fieldwork was conducted and therefore two men were interviewed as presidents of A.Pro.CUP. Manuel was the president until April 2003 when Felipe took over the position. In April 2005, the president was another resident (Samuel) who was also interviewed (for the second time, that time as the president of the association) to update information and know about Palmares during the period 2003-2005.

c) The third problem between “insiders” and “outsiders” referred to noise coming from the clubhouse that disturbed “Obras Sanitarias” residents. As expressed by Mónica, who lived in that neighbourhood: *“There were annoying noises coming from the clubhouse due to everyday parties lasting overnight until very late like 7 or 8am... Then we made a complaint to the police and they started playing music moderately and since then there haven't been so many parties... They've started showing respect”*.

Some residents from Palmares were aware of this conflict: *“There had been complaints from “Obras Sanitarias”, especially from those facing the clubhouse, who complained because there were parties with music all Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Consequently, since then you can still use the clubhouse but without putting music on”* (Roberto). Carina also knew about this conflict because *“some residents had a party in the clubhouse and people from the other side got angry and then called the police”*.

The problem was solved, but the police had to act as mediator and there was no institutional communication between the two neighbourhoods. “Outsiders” did not discuss it with Palmares’ residents and just went to the police station to make a complaint about this. Similar to the previous conflicts between “insiders” and “outsiders”, the practice of institutional communication was not carried out, although it was expected as a consequence of living in spatial proximity. This encouraged urban social group segregation by “insiders”.

d) Finally, the fourth conflict related to water shortage due to a heavier use in the area since Palmares was built. Mónica, from “Obras Sanitarias”, explained: *“Another problem is that there was more water in the area before Palmares was built. There was more water pressure, but as houses increased, water decreased, and we spent about four days without water because of the construction in Palmares and Palmares’ residents didn't care... Also, they've taken all the water for the irrigation of the area and our trees dry out... It's unfair... Water should be for all and its use should be more equitable”*. Talking about this problem, Griselda added: *“I think the residents’ association from “Obras Sanitarias” talked to Palmares, to some people from its administration, but nothing happened”*. Cristóbal, the president of “Obras

Sanitarias” residents’ association, later denied any communication with Palmares and said: *“We made a complaint to the police, to the municipality and to civil defence<sup>121</sup> ... And they came to check the water shortage like two or three times... nothing happened ... I don’t know how Palmares’ residents convinced people from these institutions to stop the case!”*.

Palmares’ residents did not know about this water shortage. But there was one resident, who coincidentally worked for the water supply company, who commented on this: *“I know there was an incident when the second stage of Palmares was being built... The pipe line wasn’t prepared to bear the weight of the land and broke down... and people living in “Obras Sanitarias” were very angry about this...”* (Alfonso).

According to the outside communities, this problem that started in 1998 had not been solved five years later at the time of the research and there was no institutional communication between them and the gated community, which denotes that in this conflict there was a situation similar to the previous conflict when analysing the relationship between neighbourhoods. The members of the residents’ association of the outside communities did not discuss with A.Pro.CUP. to find solutions to their problems. They asked third parties for intervention, which implied the lack of social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders".

The analysis of these conflicts indicates that some were solved, whilst others were not considered as significant by Palmares homeowners’ association. Some showed the precarious legal status of the gated community and also the different existing power relations between "insiders" and "outsiders". Outside communities were not successful in the solution of most problems, with the exception of being able to stop the overnight parties in the clubhouse. The problem with the service entrance was solved, but more due to a convenience of Palmares functioning than because of the complaints of “outsiders”. The municipality and the police served as mediators and provided solutions. In most cases there was no formal or informal institutional communications between the inside and outside communities. The fact that this

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<sup>121</sup> Civil defence is a government institution that deals with consequences of natural disasters and environmental hazards.

practice was not performed, when it could have been possible, means that there is a situation of **urban social group segregation** since there were no social interactions between the social groups living in spatial proximity. The particular viewpoints regarding this practice also show that there was not much consideration and awareness from "insiders" about "outsiders". The latter also had negative opinions about Palmares' residents indicating social differences as a factor for the solution or no-solution of the problems. Moreover, general viewpoints of "insiders" about "outsiders" were mostly negative, as already explained for the previous "neighbouring social practice". Therefore, according to Table 7.2, this social practice leads to **intended urban social group segregation** by Palmares' residents (Cell D).

**Table 7.2 (4.2): Institutional communication between inside and outside communities**

Viewpoints	Social practice	
	Institutional communication	
	Institutional communication between inside and outside communities	No institutional communication between inside and outside communities
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	<b>Intended segregation (D)</b>

There are different elements that made not possible to perform this practice. Individual elements expressed through the viewpoints of both social groups seemed to be significant in not promoting social relations between them. There was mainly resentment, lack of knowledge and indifference about the other social group. Within the structural factors, the different power relations evidenced the fact that Palmares' voice seemed to be more "heard" by the government for finding solutions to the problems. The solution to the problem with the service entrance was given when it was convenient for the gated community in terms of the different stages of the settlement. In addition, the way the problems were solved might show that the role of the residents' association is very different in a gated community than in an "open neighbourhood": while in the first it is one central attribute and, therefore, it is well organised and used to dealing with different issues concerning the gated community, in the case of "open neighbourhoods" these associations are not always present and if they are, their role is not always clear or they do not have power in decision-making processes. The relevance of the viewpoints and the role played by the homeowners'



association in this practice leads to **support the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since this "neighbouring social practice" resulted in urban social group segregation as a consequence of viewpoints and the gated community's attributes.

### **7.3. Practice 3: Charity work benefiting the outside poor communities**

This practice is carried out by Palmares' residents to help the outside local poor neighbourhoods and is related to the socio-economic crisis experienced by the Argentinian population at the end of 2001, as explained in Chapter 2. As a consequence of that crisis, there were riots and lootings by poor and jobless people in supermarkets. There were widely-spread rumours about the potential vulnerability of gated communities also as targets for lootings. Therefore, gated communities countrywide reinforced their security and in some of these settlements their residents implemented preventive measures. One of these consisted of developing charity practices to help the surrounding poor communities. These practices could eventually contribute to social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" and consequently discourage urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents. As far the theoretical proposition of the thesis, it would be relevant to consider whether the socio-economic level of gated communities' residents, considered as one of their attributes, would be a key factor in promoting urban social group segregation as well as the influence of viewpoints in relation to this practice. This section examines how and why this "neighbouring social practice" was carried out by Palmares' residents and also considers general and particular viewpoints of "insiders" and "outsiders".

According to the ideal type elaborated in Chapter 3, it is proposed that the existence of this "neighbouring social practice" facilitates social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders", prompting social bonds between them. On the other hand, the non-existence of a charity practice from those who have a better socio-economic level to help their poor neighbours would mean lack of solidarity and social interactions. Particular viewpoints justifying this practice are relevant and need also to be considered since charity work might appear as a moral obligation or as a way of self-protection.

Within the different neighbourhoods located outside Palmares, "Urundel" could benefit from charity activities coming from the gated community's residents.

“Urundel”, as explained in Chapter 5, was at the time of the research an informal settlement of about 160 houses and their residents were low-skilled workers. Regular charity donations (especially food and clothes) would be of great help to this population who had unmet basic needs. It would also imply the existence of social relations between people living in these two neighbourhoods, contributing to bring closer social groups located at different extremes of the social structure.

Palmares’ residents collaborated on food and money to help “Urundel”. According to Samuel, the idea started because *“A priest asked my wife for some help for an institution working with poor children... and my wife not only collaborated but started collecting things and non-perishable food and money for that institution called ‘Brazos Abiertos’ [Open Arms] in Las Heras... But then, we said: ‘if we have people in the surrounding areas who also need help, why do we have to go so far away?’ This came up because when we go to mass in Montserrat, our local church, we are told about collecting food for this other neighbourhood... How is it called? eh... “Urundel”. Then, my wife and another woman [Graciela] started working on this... We (my family) do this because we like helping people... but also with a double meaning that if we’re fine, we want that the next door neighbours would also be fine or try to help them to be a bit better... that they don’t see us as enemies or those who have everything and they don’t have anything...”*

Graciela, the other woman mentioned by Samuel, gave her version of how the charity work started related to the activities organised by the “Subcommittee of social and cultural events” of A.Pro.CUP.: *“There were many people helping soup kitchens, but it wasn’t in an organised way and many people said: ‘I’d like to help, but I don’t know who and with what’... And then instead of looking for a soup kitchen on the other side of the city, we chose the nearest one. The one here in this neighbourhood [“Urundel”] that is very poor had recently been opened and they only got some help from Caritas<sup>122</sup>. So we decided to help this soup kitchen... We’re several female residents. We organise ourselves and go house by house collecting food at the beginning of each month”*. Guido, who was the coordinator of this group from the church, provided his version of how the charity work started: *“The church gives*

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<sup>122</sup> Caritas Argentina, similarly to Caritas Internationalis, is a social organisation of the Catholic Church.

*monthly a bag with non-perishable food ... A symbolic value of 5 'pesos' is asked in return because people appreciate things more when they have to pay for it than when it's given for free... But these women from Palmares didn't want the church to ask for money if they helped with food and so they didn't want to collaborate in the beginning, but later the possibility of setting up a soup kitchen in "Urundel" came up and they accepted to collaborate from June or July 2002 to January 2003. And later they stopped giving help due to internal problems in Palmares".*

Graciela said they gave the collected money and food to "Fuchs"'s residents who worked as volunteers in the local church and helped running this soup kitchen, located in "Urundel". Belinda, who was a member of that group, added: *"Palmares collects and collaborates with the soup kitchen in "Urundel" ... I've received the collected food and money... But Palmares' residents don't want this to be known [that they collaborate]... "*. This last comment contradicts the idea of encouraging charity as a way to diminish negative perceptions, as previously mentioned by Samuel.

The charity work stopped in January 2003. The main "internal problem" that stopped this practice, as referred by Guido, was explained by Graciela: *"I'm pregnant and wasn't feeling well in January, February and March and couldn't go out to collect the food and money... Sometimes they asked for meat and vegetables so I was the one who went to buy them... I couldn't ask anybody else and then we stopped it and we'll see later"*. This shows the precariousness of this activity and the weak social commitment to continue it despite individual "problems". It also denotes that residents were not worried or did not realise that this soup kitchen depended greatly on their help. Felipe, the president of A.Pro.CUP., commented: *"Last year [2002] the gated community collaborated with a soup kitchen in "Urundel"... It isn't that people don't want to give 10 pesos, but we're all crazy with our hectic life and maybe people say: 'Come in and take it from my wallet, but don't ask me to go and give you the money'. So I'm thinking about the possibility that A.Pro.CUP. could have a monthly sum of money to help this soup kitchen... The results of the charity work done in 2002 weren't bad, but not what we expected. But it isn't that people don't want to collaborate... maybe we need to work on the way of collecting the food and money ... We'll start working on that"*. The charity practice was resumed in 2004.

Palmares' residents knew about the charity practice, but most of them did not know who the beneficiaries of the charity donations were: *"I know that there are people from the gated community who did some solidarity help for these neighbourhoods located outside, but I don't know exactly for which ones"* (Carina). Adela added: *"I participated in the collection of food and money, but I haven't been told to donate things anymore..."*.

The soup kitchen in "Urundel" was at the time of the research open only on Saturdays *"because we haven't found more sponsors to be able to open it three times a week or more"* (Felisa). It was only for children living in that neighbourhood and occasionally for elderly or sick residents. Felisa, a resident from "Urundel" involved in running the soup kitchen, said: *"We have a soup kitchen in the social room of the neighbourhood that is open on Saturdays... Last Saturday we got 92 children... We're hoping for more charity donations... The priest asks at mass because, for instance, this Saturday it was the first time that children did not get dessert because we couldn't afford it"*. According to her, the reason for this shortage of food was related to not having received more help from Palmares since January 2003.

The description on how this "neighbouring social practice" was carried out indicates that although Palmares' residents were willing to help the outside poor communities, they were not really committed since the charity work was stopped without any consideration for the inconveniences this could have. The irregularity of the practice is a significant element showing that it was not considered as a priority for Palmares. In addition, although there is a charity practice, this does not seem to encourage social interactions between "insiders" and "Urundel"'s residents since the local church acts as a mediator between the two social groups.

Viewpoints about this practice are related to three main reasons given for the provision of charity: a) help poor communities, b) having good relationships with "outsiders", and c) self-protection to prevent lootings. Most interviewed residents mentioned they wanted to help poor communities located close to Palmares, especially in the context of the 2001 crisis: *"When there was all that mess with the change of government... and the economic mess, there was so much starvation and poverty there in the outside local communities that there were food collections every*

*month here in the neighbourhood"* (Juan). The idea was *"to help people with some food and clothes"* (María) and *"help those who live in the surrounding areas, because it's pointless when you live here and you don't help the surrounding areas and go and provide help in another part of the city"* (Gretel). These narratives might suggest that charity work was considered by "insiders" as a moral obligation.

However, not all residents agreed on giving food and money: *"Charity work is done just to have a good image... I don't agree with charity donations because I think what is necessary is to educate people and give them a fishing rod, not the fish..."* (Amalia, 59-year-old property owner, Palmares' resident). This notion of wealthy people "educating" or "rehabilitating" poor people came up in some other interviews: *"It's an issue of rehabilitating and reinserting those people into society. Maybe first you offer them something like help, food and also for them to get closer to the church... It's a vicious circle because they can't get a job and then they steal. Helping them is a way of taking them out of that and reinserting them into society..."* (Graciela).

There is also an intention of having a good relationship with the surrounding area, as previously expressed by Samuel at the beginning of this section. Miguel commented about this: *"I don't think that the outside surrounding communities had a bad opinion about us [Palmares' residents] because we work with those neighbourhoods... We've helped them, giving them food and clothes..."*. These two reasons provided to justify the charity work would imply the existence of social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders".

There is also a third reason for charity practices. Residents were conscious about the vulnerability of the security system if a group of armed or violent people would decide to enter the neighbourhood by force. In this sense, charity work also had a defensive function: to prevent attacks from poor surrounding communities looking for food and money. Juan explained further: *"It wasn't compulsory. Some gave noodles or milk to try to control when there were lootings at supermarkets"* and Gretel added: *"one way to control is to help"*. When discussing about the reasons for doing charity work, Eva (64-year-old university teacher, Palmares' resident) said: *"My impression is that overall it was done due to fear of invasion of surrounding*

*neighbourhoods into the gated community*". This reason was also made explicit by Eva and Samuel.

Considering the viewpoints of "outsiders" about this practice, it is worth mentioning that only those involved in running the soup kitchen in "Urundel" knew that they were receiving help from Palmares' residents. Felisa, who was involved in the soup kitchen work, talked about the relation that "Urundel" had with Palmares. According to her, *"Palmares' residents have nothing to do with us except charity work... If they ever give us any help it's money... It's a very distant help. They don't participate. They don't attend any event. They aren't involved..."* (Felisa). Most interviewed people living in this informal settlement thought that the charity donations came exclusively from the local church. Because of this, Marcos said: *"Palmares has never donated anything here"*. Even Lucas, the president of "Urundel" residents' association, said that what the soup kitchen received *"comes from the church, not from Palmares"*. Catalina added: *"Montserrat church gives stuff here; I don't know if Palmares donates food to the church"*.

As the narratives of this section indicate, viewpoints about the reasons for doing charity work evidence contradictory situations about Palmares' residents wanting to help the outside poor community because they considered themselves luckier and wanted to help disadvantaged groups and build good relationships with the outside local communities, but also as a way of protecting themselves against a potential danger of lootings if the socio-economic situation worsened. Charity work practices imply unbalanced power relations since there is one part more powerful, in this case with more economic resources, pointing out the social differences between inside and outside the gated community. It should also be noted that in the case of Palmares' residents, people involved in the charity activities were all women, reproducing gender-biased roles. Finally, it is important to remember that, as explained for previous practices, the general viewpoints of "insiders" about "outsiders" were negative.

The information provided for this practice denotes that there was a "neighbouring social practice" of charity work by Palmares' residents. "Insiders" gave positive viewpoints about the reasons for doing charity (help poor communities), and many

residents collaborated with the collection of food and money, but also negative viewpoints (self-protection and rehabilitation of the poor). In addition, this practice did not contribute to reinforcing social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" because the local church acted as mediator. Therefore, "outsiders" did not know that they got help from Palmares and their viewpoints about the gated community's residents were negative. The different categories that this practice could get were suggested by the ideal type proposed for this practice and summarised in Table 7.3.1. Nevertheless, considering the outcomes of this practice, it seems to be difficult to fit them into one of the suggested four cells of the table. There is charity work, but the existence of this practice does not mean there are social interactions. Although there is the potential for social interaction, this does not happen and therefore there is a situation of segregation. Nevertheless, since many residents wanted to carry out this practice motivated to help the poor outside communities, the particular viewpoints about this practice are mainly positive and more significant than the negative general viewpoints. This situation of the existence of charity work, with positive viewpoints, but having segregation as a possible outcome because there are no social interactions between the two social groups is not considered in the ideal type. This outcome would mean a relevant point for the thesis: the existence of a "neighbouring social practice" **does not always imply** non-segregation since there are situations in which social interactions are desired but do not take place because they are mediated by third parties.

**Table 7.3.1 (4.3): Charity work benefiting the outside local communities (I)**

Viewpoints	Social practice Charity work	
	Charity to the outside surrounding poor community	No charity to the outside surrounding poor community
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

Considering that it is not possible to apply the outcomes of the charity work practice to the initial table suggested by the ideal type (Table 7.3.1), a new table is proposed. Table 7.3.2 considers that despite of the possibility of carrying out charity activities, this could not necessarily mean social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders"

because other institutions could intervene and act as mediators reducing the possibilities for social interactions between the two social groups.

Following Table 7.3.2, the charity practice contributes to **unintended urban social group segregation** (Cell 2) by Palmares' residents. This result **contradicts the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since it shows that not all "neighbouring social practices" lead to intended urban social group segregation. In this case, the fact that the practice is carried out through intermediaries and consequently there are no social interactions, but there are predominant positive viewpoints about the practice influences this result.

**Table 7.3.2: Charity work benefiting the outside local communities (II)**

Viewpoints	Social practice Charity work		
	Charity to the outside surrounding poor community		No charity to the outside surrounding poor community
	With social interactions	No social interactions	
Positive	Intended non-segregation (1)	<b>Unintended segregation (2)</b>	Unintended segregation (3)
Negative	Intended Non-segregation (4)	Intended segregation (5)	Intended segregation (6)

The most important structural element involved in this practice is the different allocation of economic resources in each of the social groups analysed. The economic crisis is also a relevant factor since it triggered the practice as a defensive measure and a palliative. The most important individual factor is the willingness of Palmares' residents to collaborate with the charity work. Similar to the previous practices, this practice indicates the existence of both individual and structural elements encouraging the practice. The next section examines the last practice of this chapter that is also related to the existence of a poor community living in the surrounding area of Palmares.

#### **7.4. Practice 4: Job provision for outside local communities**

This social practice considers whether Palmares' residents hire members of the outside local communities to work inside the settlement. This "neighbouring social practice" examines the impact the gated community might have as a provider of job



opportunities for the surrounding communities, particularly the low-skilled population. There is a frequent argument in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 - especially Sabatini & Salcedo (2005) and Lemanski (2005) - that sustains that gated communities can serve as job engines for the outside local residents, especially low-skilled jobs. The existence of “outsiders” working inside the gated community would bring opportunities for social interactions between the two social groups. This practice is mainly considered from the perspective of “outsiders” who are the potential workers.

A large number of low-skilled staff worked in Palmares. However, they usually did not live in the surrounding communities. The reasons for this were twofold: Firstly, in the case of services provided by individuals, like home-helps, most of them had been working for the same family for a long time, before moving to Palmares, and therefore they lived elsewhere in the city and not necessarily in the surrounding areas: *“Doña María, the woman who helps me with the work at home and cleans up, has been working for me for more than 12 years. She doesn't live close to Palmares”*, said Marisa. Secondly, security staff and gardeners worked for small private companies that provide these services to Palmares and consequently the place of living was not an issue considered when hiring workers. Facundo, the manager of Palmares, elaborated on this: *“We have out-sourced the services of maintenance, which includes street sweeping and gardening, and security to private companies. I don't know if people employed by these companies live around here... I don't think so. I know that some guards have to take two buses to come to Palmares”*. In the case of builders, they were hired by the architect or engineer in charge of the house construction and consequently their place of residence was not a relevant issue to be considered. These reasons were the structural conditions influencing this practice, whilst within the individual elements it could be possible to refer to the negative viewpoints of “insiders” about “outsiders”, as explained for previous practices.

Only three out of 19 interviewed outside residents had a work experience inside Palmares. Armando, who lived in “Altos de la Puntilla”, was an engineer who regularly worked in Palmares: *“I paved the roads of the neighbourhood... and as I'm an engineer in Hygiene and Security, I'm now working on the security of a house being built inside”* (Armando). The other two worked inside only once. Marcos,

from “Urundel”, was called to check *“a machine that wasn’t working”* and Catalina, also from “Urundel”, worked as home-help only for a few hours. She said of her work experience in Palmares: *“I went to ask for a job in Palmares... A security guard recommended me to a resident... a woman gave me some work to do in her house for a whole morning on a trial basis... But she never paid me and I felt embarrassed to go and ask for the 12 ‘pesos’”* (Catalina). She mentioned the dialogue she had with her employer about “Urundel”: *“When she asked me where I lived, she said ‘petty criminals live there’ [referring to “Urundel”] and I said to her: ‘Madame, I don’t live in a house with four sticks and a nylon roof, if you could see the house I have!’”*. Marcos complained: *“I don’t have any clients when I say that my mechanic garage is in “Urundel”. Palmares’ residents like their cars to go to a mechanic garage that has luxurious tools and very clean and all those things... but you don’t need to have so many things to know how to repair a car! If we want to work and we have our tools, no, they would prefer to choose somebody else... it’s like they discriminate against us”*. He added: *“even if they need a person to take the rubbles out, if they know that you live in “Urundel”, they won’t hire you”*. “Outsiders” seemed to be keen on working inside the gated community: *“I’d love to have clients from Palmares, but they don’t give me work because I live in “Urundel””* (Marcos).

During the research it was not possible to identify any worker from Palmares who lived in the surrounding areas, with the exception of Armando mentioned above. Felipe, the president of A.Pro.CUP., said he did not know if there were workers in Palmares who lived in the surrounding neighbourhoods. Palmares’ residents did not seem particularly interested in hiring “outsiders”. The result of this practice seems to contradict other research on gated communities where “outsiders” are hired by “insiders” (Sabatini & Salcedo, 2005).

The ideal type suggested for this practice considered that the provision of jobs for “outsiders” would prompt social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders”. The analysis of the gated community as a potential job engine and, consequently, the existence of potential social interactions, shows that the job provision for “outsiders” was not a frequent practice since only a minority group of people living in the surrounding areas of Palmares had had the opportunity of being hired by Palmares’

residents. Therefore, the main conclusion is that although the social practice might be expected because of living in spatial proximity, it was not carried out. The way jobs were provided inside the gated community indicates that it was not a task done mainly by its residents, but by private companies that hire staff to work in the gated community.

Considering the ideal type suggested for this social practice in Chapter 3, the inexistence of outside residents working in the gated community would mean no social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders". This implies urban social group segregation by the gated community's residents. In relation to viewpoints, they are both negative, general and particular viewpoints. Palmares' residents had negative viewpoints about the social groups living outside, as previously mentioned for the analyses of other practices. Many residents of the gated community did not know much about the surrounding neighbourhoods and only mentioned the existence of some dangerous neighbourhoods. In addition, "outsiders" have negative particular viewpoints about this practice indicating that social differences between "insiders" and "outsiders" might be a barrier for being hired to work in Palmares. Therefore, this practice contributes to **intended urban social group segregation** by the gated communities' residents (Cell D in Table 7.4).

**Table 7.4 (4.4): Job provision for outside local communities**

Viewpoints	Social practice Job provision	
	Work inside the gated community	No work inside the gated community
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	<b>Intended segregation (D)</b>

The outcome of this practice **supports the theoretical proposition of the thesis** because the practice leads to urban social group segregation although social interactions between different social groups living in spatial proximity are expected. The fact that the job provision practice was not carried out since insiders did not hire outsiders encouraged intended urban social group segregation, justified by the existence of negative general and particular viewpoints.

## 7.5. Conclusions

This chapter analysed the first group of "neighbouring social practices" that includes those related to the gated community's attributes, such as controlled access and security devices, the existence of a code of conduct and residents' association, the provision of services and amenities inside that require low-skilled workers, and the social differences between inside and outside the settlement. The four practices considered within this group were: 1) use of public space with restricted access; 2) institutional communication between inside and outside communities; 3) charity work benefiting the outside poor communities; and, 4) job provision for outside local communities.

The data obtained during the field research was analysed according to specially constructed ideal types for these social practices. These were useful in considering the different possibilities that each practice could get. However, reality proved to be more complex in the case of practices 1 and 3. When examining the use of public space inside Palmares, the existence of restricted access seemed to be determinant for the practice. Consequently, the name of this practice was changed to include this element and the new name given was "use of public space with restricted access". In relation to the charity practice, it appeared that the ideal type did not consider all possible outcomes of the practice. The possibility that the practice took place, but did not involve real social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" because it was mediated by a third party was not considered by the ideal type. Therefore, a new table was suggested including more possible outcomes for the practice.

Practices 1, 2 and 4 obtained similar outcomes: there is intended urban social group segregation since there are no social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" and the viewpoints of "insiders" about "outsiders" are negative. However, in the case of practices 2 and 4, social interactions did not happen because the practices were not carried out. There was no institutional communication between "insiders" and "outsiders" because there were third parties intervening in the solution of conflicts. However, and differently from the charity work, there were no intentions of encouraging social interactions between both social groups. Additionally, Palmares did not seem to work as a job provider for the outside members and this discouraged potential social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders".

Charity work benefiting the outside poor communities, practice 3, had a different result. It encouraged unintended urban social group segregation. Although the practice was carried out, there were no social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders” because the charity activities were mediated by the local church. However, segregation was not intended since “insiders” participated and collaborated with the charity donations for the outside poor communities.

All "neighbouring social practices" were explained by structural and individual elements. **The results of practices 1, 2 and 4 sustain the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since there is intended urban social group segregation and this is explained by the attributes of the gated community: in the case of Practice 1, the closed perimeter, the use of security devices and the existence of a code of conduct; in the case of Practice 2, the existence of the homeowners' association was important, although there were not social interactions and the conflicts were not solved as a result of the practice, but as a result of the action of third parties; in the case of Practice 4, attributes were not so relevant, while structural conditions seemed to be prevalent. In all cases there were both negative general and particular viewpoints. **The result of Practice 3 contradicts the theoretical proposition of the thesis** because this practice leads to unintended urban social group segregation as there are no social interactions, although viewpoints are positive.

The relationships between the outcomes of these practices and the research questions of the thesis are considered in the conclusions of the thesis. The next chapter continues with the analysis of the second group of "neighbouring social practices" to see whether their results sustain or contradict the theoretical proposition of the thesis.

## **CHAPTER 8:**

### **NEIGHBOURING SOCIAL PRACTICES AND VIEWPOINTS: ANALYSIS OF URBAN LIFE PRACTICES**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter continues the examination of the “neighbouring social practices” carried out by gated communities’ residents. It analyses social practices included in Group B (Practices 5 to 10)<sup>123</sup>, which are those related to urban life in general and carried out by most citizens and whether or not Palmares’ residents interact with “outsiders” when carrying out these practices. This group includes six “neighbouring social practices”: 5) social relations and venues for socialisation; 6) shopping; 7) schooling; 8) religious practices; 9) sports; and 10) use of public transport. These are practices that can be carried out by any social actor, living in “open neighbourhoods” or gated communities. The relationships between “insiders” and “outsiders” are the focus of the analysis. This does not mean that “insiders” do not interact with people living in other city areas. On the contrary, it is assumed that Palmares’ residents have contacts with other citizens, especially because of the short life of the gated community. However, the examination of the relationships with other people not living in spatial proximity or social practices carried out in other city areas is beyond this thesis.

The short life of Palmares appeared as a key factor influencing the links that its residents have with other city areas and their experiences. They were likely to maintain the links with other city areas because they had not been in Palmares for a long time. In addition, because there had not yet been a generation of adults brought up in this gated community, when adults spoke about their children, they did it from their own life experiences which were not in gated communities, but in “open neighbourhoods”. This might change in some years when children will turn into adults and will be able to speak from the perspective of someone who grew up in a gated community. It could also happen that the links with other city areas become weaker.

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<sup>123</sup> These numbers correspond to the general classification of the ten “neighbouring social practices”.

Similar to the practices in Group A, these six practices are analysed according to the ideal types elaborated for the thesis and related to the general and particular viewpoints of "insiders" and "outsiders". For the purpose of the thesis, these practices are examined as performed and explained by the gated communities' residents, according to the information gathered during the field research. Some practices (like practices 5 and 6) allow for a more detailed analysis than others because they involve several aspects related to how social relations were constructed in a more comprehensive way. These practices are examined following the theoretical proposition of the thesis to assess whether living in gated communities might encourage urban social group segregation by their residents or not. The analysis starts with the examination of how, where and with whom Palmares' residents socialised.

### **8.1. Practice 5: Social relations and venues for socialisation**

Socialisation concerns the activities carried out by Palmares' residents when spending their free time and meeting other individuals or groups. It is expected that different social groups living in spatial proximity would have opportunities for social interactions. This practice considers with whom and where the gated community's residents interact to examine if there are social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders". It is considered that there are social interactions between these two groups if they socialise together and use similar venues for socialisation. In contrast, there is urban social group segregation if "insiders" do not socialise with "outsiders", nor share the same venues for socialisation.

As elaborated for the ideal type of this practice, the analysis considers two venues for socialisation: a) the gated community, which is divided into common places (social and sport amenities) and private places (houses); and, b) the surrounding local communities. Each venue is considered according to whether both groups use it and if "insiders" socialise amongst themselves or if they also have "outsiders" as partners for socialisation. Thus, this section pays special attention to the composition of the socialisation groups of people living in Palmares. There are social interactions (and consequently non-segregation) when Palmares' residents socialise with "outsiders". There is also non-segregation when they socialise only with "insiders", but in the surrounding local communities. This situation implies that the gated community's

residents do not segregate themselves from the local communities and the use of the outside facilities prompt social interactions with “outsiders”. In contrast, there is segregation if the gated community’s residents only socialise with other “insiders” within the gated community.

The theoretical proposition of the thesis states, as previously mentioned, that "neighbouring social practices" by gated communities’ residents lead to intended urban social group segregation by this social group, which is explained by their viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community. Therefore, it is important to consider the particular viewpoints related to this practice, such as why they socialise with a particular social group and the venues used, and also the general viewpoints of one social group about the other social groups living in spatial proximity. It is also relevant to think about whether some of the attributes of the gated community, like its security devices and amenities, influence the use of the venues for socialisation. This is a significant practice considering that building up social relations constitutes an essential activity in the everyday life of social actors living in cities. Therefore, identifying whether it is possible for gated communities’ residents to have partners for socialisation who live in the surrounding areas, and also to be able to socialise in venues located in the surrounding communities, is important to clarify the relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation. It is worth noting that when social actors describe their socialisation practices, they colloquially refer to friends and friendship and not to socialisation<sup>124</sup>.

Age and gender differences were expected when performing this practice. However, the data collected during the field research showed that while no gender differences existed, there were differences according to the residents’ age for this practice. Thus, the analysis is based on the following groups: adults, teenagers and young adults, and children. The use of the two socialisation venues is considered for each group.

#### **8.1.1. Socialisation in the gated community**

The gated community is considered as a venue for socialisation, where there are two types of places for performing this practice: common and private places. Starting

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<sup>124</sup> This is particularly the case in Spanish where *socialización* is a very formal word. Therefore, quotations from the interviewees respect this use of the language.



with the socialisation practices carried out in the common places of the gated community, these consist of social and sport amenities. Palmares, as described in Chapter 5, had a clubhouse, with a coffee place inside, used by “insiders” as a social venue for meetings and parties. This was the most important venue for socialisation inside the gated community. Sport amenities, including football pitch, tennis courts and swimming pool, were used (as analysed in detail in the Sports Practice) and prompted socialisation with other residents. There was also a communal garden with a pond used as meeting place by some teenagers.

Adults used the common facilities in Palmares: *“We use the clubhouse if we need it. For instance we can rent the room of the clubhouse to celebrate a birthday to avoid using our house”* (Alvaro). Also for Rosario: *“Here in Palmares you have more contact with neighbours, you go for a walk and then you stop over in one house to say ‘hi’ or meet some people in the clubhouse, which offers the possibility of going there to have a ‘lomito’<sup>125</sup> or a coffee at night”*. José added: *“We sometimes go to the clubhouse to have a coffee and chat with other neighbours”*. For Adela, a Spanish woman who did not know many people in Mendoza when she moved to that city five years earlier, *“one benefit of living in a gated community is that you might find a nice group of friends and you start meeting people... It’s also good for children...they can ride their bikes and play together”*. As these testimonies indicate, the existence of common places might encourage socialisation between residents as they mentioned using these facilities. The possibility of having new friends was also considered as an advantage of living in a gated community.

Young adults and teenagers - between 15 to 25 years old - also used the clubhouse and other common places inside Palmares: *“I meet my friends here at home or in other places in the gated community like the clubhouse, but my friends aren’t from Palmares... They live in other parts of the city”* (Lionel). Rebeca said: *“There is a pond in the middle of the neighbourhood in the communal garden. When my friends, who live in other parts of the city, visit me, we lie down there, close to the pond, because it’s very quiet and you know it’s secure and then we stay there until 4am and there is no problem”*. As these testimonies express, this age group also used the

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<sup>125</sup> *Lomito* is a beef sandwich in Argentina.

common venues of the gated community for socialisation not only with other “insiders”, but also with people living in other city areas. Members of the surrounding communities were not included in their groups of friends.

Children and young teenagers also used the gated community as a venue for socialisation, especially the clubhouse as mentioned by them and by adults. Graciela described the socialisation activities performed by her children and compared them to the previous situation when they lived in an “open neighbourhood”: *“My son can ride his bike with his friends everywhere in the gated community until 11pm and he’s 10 years old... He has done this since he’s 8. My daughter meets her friends to play cards... She can go out at any time at night... She’s all day outdoor in the open air, while before coming here my kids were inside the house all the time and I had to find them an activity not to get bored, take them to a club, ...they would watch TV, stay indoors all the time... and here they come and go. They have lots of friends in the gated community... This isn’t possible when you live in the ‘open city’ due to insecurity, you don’t allow your kid to go alone, not even to the newsagent’s because s/he can be robbed...”*. For Palmares’ manager, *“the clubhouse works as an important place for socialisation. We’re trying to develop different activities for kids in the clubhouse... There is a summer school, a tennis school and also a new football school”* (Facundo). Gregorio, who was 13-years-old, said: *“We always go to the clubhouse... We have the swimming pool there or we might play a ‘truco’<sup>126</sup> tournament”*. According to these narratives, children and young teenagers used the common areas of Palmares and there was a special interest in this. Some activities had been organised to foster the use of the clubhouse by this age group.

The comments provided by each age group of residents evidenced that the common areas of the gated community were used by adults, young residents, teenagers and children as venues for socialisation. The particular viewpoints reinforce the idea that this practice could be safely performed inside, without worries about insecurity. The use of these venues was also considered as practical when residents did not want to socialise at home and preferred to do it in the clubhouse. In the case of children and teenagers, the use of venues inside the gated community was convenient since they

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<sup>126</sup> *Truco* is the most popular card game in Argentina.

did not have to depend on adults to move around. The attributes of the gated community influenced this practice, as having common places for socialisation meant the possibility of carrying it out inside without needing to go elsewhere. The provision of security as an attribute of the gated community was also relevant since it implied that parents allowed their children to be alone while socialising. In all cases, residents socialised with both insiders and other friends who lived in other city areas. Their friends did not live in the surrounding local communities, which encourage urban social group segregation. Moreover, “outsiders” were not allowed to use the amenities inside Palmares and therefore there were no possibilities for social interactions between these two groups.

The second venue for socialisation within the gated community consists of private places (individual houses). Houses were often used to socialise with extended family and friends, who usually lived in other city areas or in Palmares, but not in the surrounding local communities: *“My friends live in different areas of the city. The relationship with my friends hasn’t changed. But now I can invite more people to my house because it’s bigger and we can invite them for barbecues... The garden is big and we can have more guests. We don’t have many friends inside... only one or two couples”* (Victor).

Half of the interviewed adults had friends inside. However, there were three different situations concerning the composition of their groups of friends: 1) friends from before moving to the gated community; 2) acquaintances who became friends when they moved to the gated community; 3) members who did not know each other before moving to the gated community and became friends afterwards. Carla illustrated the first situation: *“I have many friends who lived outside before and now live here in Palmares...”*. Saúl added: *“We, my wife and me, haven’t made new friends here in Palmares ... The ones we have are from before moving here...”*. Marisol, a sociologist who lived in Palmares, mentioned social homogeneity as a reason to move to gated communities, but excluded herself from those who think likewise: *“I think there is, in some cases, the need to be surrounded by equal people, the need of having more homogeneous groups... I think people seek this spontaneously... It isn’t my case though, but one can’t ignore realities...”*. For Miguel, *“There are many people who buy a plot or a house here because somebody*

*else told them to do so or somebody else they know is living in the settlement... ”*. The fact that many residents mentioned having friends who had also moved to this gated community showed that there was some interest in fostering social homogeneity and living closer to friends and acquaintances. Social homogeneity was mentioned as a cause for moving to a gated community in Chapter 2. Nevertheless, the testimonies about not having new friends in the gated community might indicate that although residents were interested in acquiring social homogeneity in the settlement, this referred more to reinforcing social bonds with those who were already friends than having new friends.

The second situation for the composition of friends occurred when residents knew each other before moving to Palmares, but were not friends: *“Now I go on holidays and practise sports with friends who live in the neighbourhood. I knew them before moving to Palmares, but we weren’t friends and once we moved here the relationship became more fluid. I think we’re friends now”* (Enrique). The third situation referred to obtaining new friends since moving to the gated community: *“We’ve made new friends in Palmares. People are so nice. It’s all people about our age, maybe a bit older or a bit younger than us, but we’re all in the same situation and we do similar things. We regularly meet for barbecues in somebody’s house, especially all of us who live in the same street... It’s like we’ve opened up our social relations. We didn’t know anybody before moving here”* (Carolina). Gretel added: *“We’ve become very good friends with other people living here and meet up a lot... We go out for dinner, meet in a house, and celebrate birthdays”*. There were also combinations of these three situations. For instance, the combination of the first and third situations was very frequent, like in the case of Rosario: *“I have friends that I knew before coming here and others that became friends since I live here”*. Many adult residents had friends inside and outside Palmares. They tried to keep a balance with all their groups of friends, meeting them regularly and not socialising exclusively with only one group: *“I have groups of friends inside and outside and try to meet them both regularly”* (Samuel).

Adults living in Palmares can be divided into those who had friends inside and met them at home (made before or during the time living in the gated community), as previous narratives illustrated, and those who did not. There was no relation between

having friends inside Palmares and the time living in the gated community. Carolina and her husband, as already mentioned, had new friends in the settlement despite having been there only nine months. On the other hand, some adults had been in Palmares for several years and did not have friends inside, like Alfonso, an engineer who had been living there for three years: *"We don't have friends inside because we don't have much free time"*.

Alfonso's situation was not isolated. Many adults living in Palmares did not practise any social activity with other residents. The most important reasons given for this were: feelings of incompatibility with other people living inside; the lack of need to have new friends and of interest in having friends inside, and of free time for socialising. Clara commented on her feelings of incompatibility with other residents: *"I don't yet have a sense of belonging... Besides, social relations here are a bit shallow...I'm not fully integrated with other residents... I met some residents who were very stupid and lived in an ivory tower... I work with pregnant teenagers, I deal with kids who use drugs...and here when you meet someone, it's all about the sauna they have at home, the holidays in Camboriú... They live in their own world ... Then I feel different from the people who live here and it's more difficult to socialise"*. Luisa, a property owner, also felt that she had not found people with similar interests to hers: *"I haven't met many people. I'm not the kind of person who would be having a 'mate'<sup>127</sup> or gossiping in the afternoon"*. Inés stated why she did not need new friends and was not interested in socialising with "insiders": *"I have a good relation with my neighbours... But I don't do any activity with them because in fact I do all my activities with my friends; and my friends are from school and live in other areas of the city. I've had them for million years and I normally do my social activities with them"*. Miguel illustrated why he was not interested in making friends amongst Palmares' residents: *"I don't like doing neighbourhood activities... Our friends are friends that we know and we've chosen them not because we're living next door... If there would be a neighbourhood activity tomorrow, we wouldn't go..."*. Antonieta (55-year-old housewife, Palmares' resident) said: *"There was a group of women in Palmares who organised monthly tea meetings and celebrated birthdays. They always invited me, but I never attended because I didn't like it. I preferred to stay*

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<sup>127</sup> *Mate* is a typical infusion from Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and the south of Brazil. Having *mates* could be a social activity.

*with my family*". Juan justified that he and his wife did not do any activity with other residents due to a lack of free time: *"We haven't had time for socialising... all residents live their own relations... and the kids are too small and we need to take care of them... and we're working all the time..."*.

When Palmares' residents were asked if they had relationships with the outside surrounding communities, most people, like Victor, said: *"No, I don't know anybody there. I don't have friends there"*. This applied to all age groups and both women and men. Only a few interviewed "insiders" had some relationships with members of the outside surrounding communities. Gastón and Esteban said they knew some people who lived in "Fuchs", the middle-class neighbourhood: *"I belong to a club of people who drive 4x4 cars; we drive them in different areas of the city. There are some people from Fuchs there"* (Gastón). Inés had a friend who lived in "Altos de la Puntilla". Enrique, who worked as trainer in the gym located in "Palmares Open Mall", said he knew some residents from "Fuchs" who were either his friends or went to the gym. Nevertheless, these cases constituted more exceptions than the existence of regular socialisation links between "insiders" and "outsiders" since the former did not spend much time with "outsiders". It is also worth noting that no one interviewed "insider" mentioned knowing people from "Urundel", the informal settlement, which evidenced the social distance between the residents of this neighbourhood and Palmares' residents.

These opinions illustrate that the composition of socialisation groups of "insiders" varied. Some had friends inside, although they were friends before moving to Palmares; others had made new friends inside. There were also some residents that did not have friends in the gated community for a diverse range of reasons. Adults usually maintained their social and friendship networks from before moving to Palmares, which involved people living in other city areas. They did not have friends living in the surrounding areas, which implies urban social group segregation.

In contrast with the situation of adults, the composition of their groups of friends was different in the case of children, teenagers and young adults. Most teenagers and young adults - ages from 15 to 25 years old - did not have any friend in the gated community. The reasons for this were similar to those given by adults. Close to what

Lionel said earlier, Martín, a 15-year-old student, expressed: *"I know some kids from here [Palmares] and they're nice, but I don't have friends here because I have already my friends from school - and no one lives in Palmares, they live in other parts of the city -and I go out with them"*. Rebeca said: *"I don't have any relation with Palmares' residents because I don't like this type of people... They're kids who've been born in gated communities and they aren't streetwise ...The only thing I like about living in the gated community is that I have security"*. Other opinions included: *"I don't have any affinity or friendship relation with anybody here in Palmares... maybe because we've just arrived... or maybe because we aren't in the same social environment as many people here... I go out with people from outside the settlement; they live in other city areas..."* (Gerardo); and *"I don't have friends here because I'm not interested in that"* (Fernando). These narratives show that most teenagers and young residents did not socialise with other gated community's residents because they had no interest in doing so and they sometimes had negative opinions about other people living in the gated community. They had the experience of living in "non-gated neighbourhoods" and kept their links with friends who lived in other city areas. But they did not have friends in the surrounding local areas. In addition, they did not often use their houses as venues for socialisation. Fernando, a young resident who formerly lived in "Fuchs" before moving to Palmares, constituted an exception amongst Palmares' residents since he said: *"the majority of my friends live in 'Fuchs'"* (Fernando).

These opinions show that most adults' and young residents' friends were not from the gated community. This was different for children and young teenagers (less than 15 years old) who spent most of their leisure time inside Palmares with the other children, playing inside their houses and using the common places, as already mentioned. Their practices were explained mainly by their parents. Gretel, who had been living in Palmares for seven years and had three children of 8, 9 and 16 years old, pointed out a difference of place of residence of her children's friends: *"My younger kids have their friends inside the neighbourhood... They came here very young and so they usually play at home... The eldest one might have more friends outside because of his age... he has friends inside, but more outside the neighbourhood"*. Rosario, who had two children of 8 and 10 years old, said: *"My children ride their bikes and play at home with other kids from the neighbourhood..."*

*and also before moving here they knew some of the kids because they attend the same school". Gregorio, who was 13 years old and had lived in Palmares for three years, said: "I have more friends inside the gated community than outside... because I stay inside most of the time. We meet in our houses... They're all my age, between 11 and 13 years old... We're all the time between 5 and 7 people... There are also girls".*

These responses indicate that many children used their houses for socialisation with other "insiders". Similar to the other age groups, they did not have friends living in the surrounding communities. This would encourage urban social group segregation. In the case of this age group, the experiences of socialisation before moving to the gated community were very limited and they could not compare between this practice performed in the gated community and their previous residence. It would be interesting to analyse how the practice of this group evolves and if they would enlarge their groups for socialisation when they grow up.

Socialising only within the gated community either in the common or the private places might have consequences for children according to some parents. Socialisation is seen as "forced" and "protected" (Svampa, 2001) and related to not being able to "see reality" and "living in a bubble", as mentioned by some Palmares' residents. Edgardo expressed: *"My kids will be raised in a world apart... My kids live in a gated community, go to private clubs, attend private schools, and this isn't real at all...; whereas their father was raised in a 'normal neighbourhood', and I went to state primary and secondary schools and state university...It's a big contrast".* To overcome this situation, he explained his position: *"What's my job then? I have to tell my son: 'You live here but you need to have your head on the other side, you need to know that competence outside is harder than here inside'..."*. For Clara, *"Teenagers, or maybe earlier from 8 or 9 years old, they feel themselves different and they remain like an elite group... I think that living in a gated community gives you like a brand and kids feel this and this brand means that you attend a particular school and it's all a chain of things..."*.

Following the argument about the "bubble", Victor said: *"There is the syndrome of 'kids who live in gated communities'... these are kids raised in a crystal bubble and they don't have the witticism, roguery and quickness that other kids living elsewhere*



*might have... ”. In relation to the closed social circles, Marisol, whose children were at the time of the research 18 and 25 years old, commented on her experience: “If my children would have been younger, I would have thought more about whether to move to Palmares or not because kids are raised in too homogeneous a social environment and I’m interested that my children know and live diversity. The world is different; people are different, not only in terms of socio-economic levels, but also in all aspects. My kids grew up in a neighbourhood of people from different levels. And it was very positive for them and they learnt to see, to share poverty and to have friends from different economic levels and cultural backgrounds... ” .*

Closed socialisation seemed to be a problem for children, but not for adults or young people since the latter usually go out to the “outside world”. The short life of Palmares influenced the practice. Adults and young people had lived most of their lives in “open neighbourhoods” and they had kept their social networks and friends from other places. Conversely, most children had not been able to keep their former friends and had a very short socialisation experience in their former houses. The analysis of the narratives about the use of the houses as venues for socialisation showed that while adults and children used them, young adults and teenagers did not often use this venue. In the case of adults and children, they socialised in their houses because it was convenient, safe and practical. This refers to having security in the gated community, as well as large and comfortable houses where it was possible to socialise. In the case of teenagers and young adults, they did not often meet at home because most of their friends lived elsewhere in the city and they met in other city areas.

Following these findings indicating that Palmares’ residents did not have friends who lived in the surrounding communities, it was important to consider the experiences of “outsiders” regarding this and compare them with those of “insiders”. The majority of the outside residents expressed not having any social relations with Palmares’ residents. Only a few of those interviewed mentioned some social bonds with “insiders”: *“I’ve been inside Palmares because I have friends living there and I visit them every two months more or less”* (Flavia, from “Altos de la Puntilla”, the upper-middle class neighbourhood). Leopoldo (from “Fuchs”, the middle-class neighbourhood) also had friends in Palmares: *“I have some friends who live in*

*Palmares and sometimes I go and visit them at home*". Mónica, who lived in "Obras Sanitarias", one of the middle-class outside neighbourhoods, said: *"My daughters have friends who live in Palmares and I took them there for a party"*. These were the only few exceptions of interviewed "outsiders" who knew some "insiders", but most of the former did not know anybody living in the gated community. These people had hardly ever used the houses of Palmares' residents as places for socialisation. In the case of the common places of the gated community, no "outsider" had used them. This had to do with the impossibility of getting access unless being invited. These exceptions did not constitute deep situations of socialisation practices since they were more like acquaintances and not friends with whom they would meet once in a while, or they had met only once, like in the case of Mónica.

"Outsiders" mentioned the lack of social relations with "insiders" inside the gated community and commented on the reasons for this. Gabriel, who lived in "Fuchs", said: *"I don't have any relationship with people living in Palmares. I don't know anybody there. I don't think there would be a neighbour or friendship relation just because of living nearby. Moreover, if you have the possibility of living in Palmares it's because you move in a different social environment than me and probably your friends would be from that environment ... I'm not saying that there can't be friends from different social groups, but it's just because I don't know anybody living in Palmares and because there are no people with high socio-economic level where I socialise..."*. According to this testimony, residents of the outside communities identified socio-economic differences as an obstacle for socialising with Palmares' residents. For Cristóbal: *"Palmares' residents don't have any relation with the surroundings. They don't want to have it... It's like having a neighbour for 10 or 20 years who never talks to you..."*. Catalina, from "Urundel", said: *"Palmares' residents don't have any contact with us. They don't care about the outside people... They forget there are people outside..."*. It is relevant to mention that "Altos de la Puntilla"'s residents, who had a higher socio-economic level than the rest of the outside surrounding communities, did not mention these socio-economic differences between "insiders" and "outsiders" and felt closer to Palmares' residents in relation to their interests and social practices. Most of them, like the gated community's residents, were professionals. In contrast, none of the residents from "Urundel", the poorest neighbourhood of the area, had any social contact with Palmares' residents:

*"I don't have any relationship with people from Palmares. I don't know them"* (Vanina, from "Urundel"). This seems to indicate that social relations become more difficult to establish when the socio-economic level gap is bigger.

Like Palmares' residents, "outsiders" also referred to disadvantages of the closed socialisation carried out by "insiders" and also referred to the image of the "bubble" that the gated community represents. Gema was of the opinion that *"kids grow up knowing that their relationships are within a particular group of people and they attend private schools. Then, it's all connected. If you live in Palmares, you don't attend the state school in 'Fuchs'"*. Lorna added: *"Kids who live in a gated community usually attend private schools and are in different environments from kids who don't live in gated communities. It's like as if they grow up inside a bubble. And at some point the bubble is going to explode because when you enter university, when you start working, you start making contact with a different world and kids aren't always prepared for this change... It depends a lot on the education you give to your kids. If you don't make them realise that there are other realities different from theirs, this is up to you"*.

The analysis of the experiences and viewpoints of "outsiders" indicates that there were no social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" as a consequence of some attributes of the gated community, like the controlled access which did not allow "outsiders" to use Palmares' facilities. "Outsiders" thought most "insiders" only socialised amongst themselves. However, viewpoints about why "insiders" did not socialise with "outsiders" varied according to the socio-economic level of the outside residents<sup>128</sup>. While the poorest and middle-class residents considered the lack of socialisation with Palmares' residents was related to socio-economic differences between these two groups, people living in "Altos de la Puntilla", the upper-middle class neighbourhood, mentioned different interests as a reason for not socialising with "insiders, as Lorna said: *"I don't have friends in Palmares, maybe because I don't do the same activities they do or go to the same places"*.

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<sup>128</sup> The field research identified the socio-economic differences of the four outside neighbourhoods, as explained in Chapter 5. These differences influenced sometimes the relationships with Palmares' residents or the viewpoints about them. Reference to this is made in the analysis when collected data was clear enough to evidence these differences.

The use of the venues of the gated community (common and private places) for socialisation indicates that most “insiders” used both places to meet with other “insiders”, extended family or friends living elsewhere in the city. In relation to the partners of socialisation of “insiders”, there were considerable differences according to age groups, but no gender differences. Adults had both friends living inside and in other city areas. Teenagers and young adults had mainly friends who lived in other city areas and were not interested in socialising with other “insiders”. Children had mainly friends inside the gated community. This closed socialisation had some negative consequences according to their parents and also to “outsiders”. The attributes of the gated community influenced this practice since having common social infrastructure and good quality houses implied having good and comfortable venues for socialisation. The security of the gated community meant parents would allow their children to socialise without fear of insecurity. In all the cases, “insiders” did not socialise with members of the surrounding communities for two reasons. Firstly, as explained for the practice of use of public space with restricted access (Practice 1), it was not possible for “outsiders” to enter freely the gated community and use the collective social and sport amenities. Secondly, there were no friendship relations between “insiders” and “outsiders”, with the exception of a few cases that were more acquaintances than friends with whom they would not regularly socialise. All these were from the upper or middle-class neighbourhoods, not the informal settlement. Viewpoints also indicated that insiders were not interested in building up new social relationships, which could include relationships with “outsiders”. From the perspective of the latter, it was difficult to establish social bonds mainly as a consequence of the social differences between the social groups. The use of the gated community as a venue for socialisation led to **intended urban social group segregation** by gated communities’ residents since there were negative viewpoints about the other social group and about the practice and “insiders” only socialised with other residents from the gated community or citizens living elsewhere in the city, but not with “outsiders”.

### **8.1.2. Socialisation in the surrounding communities**

Following the ideal type of this practice, the second type of venues for socialisation were those located in the surrounding local communities. These mainly referred to the shopping centre located next to Palmares since there were no other social venues

there. Most Palmares' residents went to the shopping centre for recreation, regardless of their age and gender. They would go to the multiplex cinema or to eat in the food hall, where there are restaurants and fast-food places.

Most interviewed adults used these facilities for socialisation: *"On a Saturday morning or a weekday if we have time I meet my friends for a coffee in the shopping mall... The advantage is that you have everything close. I don't miss the city centre... I have everything at arm's length... It's fantastic! But you become very sedentary. I admit that it's hard to go outside of here"* (Soledad). This comment shows that many "insiders" considered the shopping centre as part of the gated community. Celina added the "security issue" to her decision of where to socialise: *"We go less to restaurants outside the shopping centre because the simple thing of having to take the car out of the garage and take those insecure roads to go elsewhere makes us decide to stay in the shopping centre because it's more relaxing"*.

Young adults also used the shopping centre for socialisation, especially to go to the cinema or to meet other friends who live elsewhere: *"Sometimes we go to have dinner in the food hall of the shopping centre or we go to the cinema there... that's all we do in the surrounding areas..."* (Julieta). Lionel added: *"Sometimes I meet my friends in the shopping centre, we eat something or have a drink there"*. However, young people also said they used the city centre to socialise with their friends: *"I meet my friends in the centre or in Chacras"* (Gerardo).

In the case of children and young teenagers, they also used the shopping centre for socialisation. Some teenagers would go on their own, like Constanza who said: *"Sometimes I go with my friends from here to the shopping centre to have an ice cream"*. Children would usually go accompanied by adults, as Graciela expressed: *"We meet in the shopping mall... on a Saturday or Friday evening you take the kids to the play area and you sit at a table and meet other people from the gated community and share the table..."*.

These narratives indicate that most "insiders" from the three age groups used the facilities of the shopping centre for socialisation and in some cases this was preferred to having to go elsewhere because it was close to their houses and safe. Young adults

also socialised in other city areas. Nevertheless, in any case residents mentioned socialising in the surrounding areas with “outsiders”, only with other “insiders” or people living in other city areas.

In the case of “outsiders”, some also used the shopping centre for socialisation: *“We go to the shopping centre to have dinner... or to the children’s play area, but this isn’t a daily activity”* (Lucía, from “Fuchs”). Another “Fuchs” resident said: *“For us, having the shopping centre here means the possibility of shopping and of spending a Saturday in a different way; to do that before you needed to go to the city centre”* (Gema). However, the use of these facilities is not so frequent in the case of “outsiders”, especially because eating out or going to the cinema are expensive activities: *“Prices in the shopping centre are higher than in other city areas”* (Gabriel, also from “Fuchs”). Thus, some “outsiders” might use the shopping centre for socialisation, but not on a regular basis. Moreover, the interviewed residents from “Urundel”, the informal settlement, did not use the shopping centre for socialisation. “Outsiders” did not socialise with “insiders” and thought the latter usually socialised only amongst themselves. *“They live in a bubble”*, said Gabriel. Also, as previously explained, most Palmares’ residents mentioned they were not interested in expanding their socialisation groups.

The shopping centre was used by “insiders” for socialisation, but it was rarely used by “outsiders”. Within the latter group, there were differences because while people from “Fuchs” would occasionally socialise in that venue, “Urundel”’s residents had never used it. It is also interesting to note that “Altos de la Puntilla”’s residents did not use the shopping centre for socialisation, although they could afford it and went there for shopping, as Practice 6 indicates. The possibilities for social interactions between these two groups were limited. Palmares’ residents did not meet “outsiders” in the shopping centre, but other “insiders” or friends who lived in other city areas. “Outsiders” did not regularly use that venue for socialisation because it was expensive. This was very clear in the case of the poorest social group living outside Palmares who would never go to the shopping centre. Nevertheless, the fact that “insiders” used the shopping centre would prompt social interactions with “outsiders” and mean that the former did not segregate themselves from the surrounding communities because they used the facilities there. It is then a situation

of **unintended non-segregation** since there were negative viewpoints about this practice and social interactions were not pursued.

### **8.1.3. Socialisation practice: conclusions**

This section examined the use of socialisation venues inside Palmares (common and private places) and in the surrounding communities (the shopping centre). The analysis was done according to these two venues and also considered where the partners for socialisation of Palmares' residents lived. The population of the gated community was divided according to age groups since there were differences according to age, but not to gender.

In the case of the use of the gated community as a venue for socialisation, most interviewed Palmares residents used both the common and private places. They mainly interacted there with other "insiders" or with friends living elsewhere in the city. While most children had most of their friends from the gated community, adults had a mixed composition of friends from Palmares and from elsewhere, and young residents and teenagers had more friends living in other city areas. There were no social relationships with members of the surrounding local communities, with few exceptions from "Altos de la Puntilla" and "Fuchs", the upper-middle and middle-class neighbourhoods.

"Outsiders" did not use the inside venues since there were restrictions for this. Thus, social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" were not frequent, despite the spatial proximity. There were also negative viewpoints of "outsiders" regarding the socialisation practices of Palmares' residents.

The general viewpoints of "insiders" about "outsiders" are a cross-cutting variable that is considered for all "neighbouring social practices". It has already been addressed in Chapter 7. Most Palmares' residents considered the outside surrounding communities as "poor" and "dangerous", although some residents made some distinctions about the different socio-economic composition of the outside neighbourhoods. Moreover, there were many residents who did not know people outside and not even the neighbourhoods' names. Consequently, it can be considered

that most general viewpoints are negative, similar to the particular viewpoints for this practice.

Therefore, considering the ideal type elaborated for the socialisation practice, the use of the gated community as a venue for socialisation encouraged **intended urban social group segregation** (Cell B in Table 8.1) because there was no social interaction between "insiders" and "outsiders" since the former did not socialise with "outsiders" and all viewpoints were negative. This situation applied to all age groups.

**Table 8.1 (4.5): Social relations and venues for socialisation**

Social practice: Social relations and venues for socialisation			
Venues for socialisation	Partners for socialisation	Viewpoints	
		Positive	Negative
Gated community	"Insiders"	Unintended segregation (A)	<b>Intended segregation (B)</b>
	"Outsiders"	Intended non-segregation (C)	Unintended non-segregation (D)
Surrounding communities	"Insiders"	Intended non-segregation (E)	<b>Unintended non-segregation (F)</b>
	"Outsiders"	Intended non-segregation (G)	Unintended non-segregation (H)

There were structural elements related to the attributes of the gated community that influenced the result of this practice, like the inside social amenities, good quality houses, security provision and closed access. Having social amenities inside meant that residents could meet their friends in the common places of the gated community and in their comfortable houses. The security provision made residents felt safe to socialise inside the gated community without being worried about security problems, especially in relation to children. The closed access to the settlement resulted in "outsiders" not being allowed to enter freely to use the social facilities and constituted an obstacle for social interactions. There were also individual elements, which in this case seem to be more relevant. These were the interests of social actors, which led some "insiders" not to find it necessary to meet new people because they had already their groups of friends. It was also related to negative opinions about the other social groups, which would probably stop any potential social interactions. Therefore, **the analysis of the use of the gated community for the socialisation practice supports the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since it led to intended



urban social group segregation by Palmares' residents, as explained by their viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community.

The analysis of the shopping centre located in the surrounding local communities as the second venue for socialisation had a different outcome. All age groups of Palmares' residents used the shopping centre for socialising with friends, who were mainly from the gated community or from elsewhere in the city. Although they did not socialise with "outsiders", the use of this venue meant that Palmares' residents did not segregate themselves from the surrounding local communities and this could have prompted social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders", even when these were still limited since not many "outsiders" used the shopping centre. This means that the use of the outside local communities venues for the socialisation of the gated community's residents led to **unintended non-segregation** (Cell F in Table 8.1) since the practice could eventually have fostered social interactions. However, these were not pursued by "insiders". Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the possibilities for social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" in the shopping centre varied according to the socio-economic level of "outsiders". There were, for instance, more opportunities for socialising with "Fuchs" residents (middle-class), than with those from "Urudel", who hardly used those facilities.

There are different elements that led to this result. There were structural elements related to the lack of economic resources by "outsiders" to be able to use the shopping centre as a socialisation venue, which means that mainly "insiders" used it. Individual elements (viewpoints) also influenced since both groups had no interests in interacting. The attributes of the gated community did not contribute to this since the practice was carried out outside the gated community. The analysis of the use of the outside local communities venues for the socialisation of the gated community's residents **contradicts the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since it led to unintended non-segregation by Palmares' residents, who did not segregate from the outside local communities.

## 8.2. Practice 6: Shopping

Residents living in spatial proximity are expected to develop social interactions while shopping in their local areas. This is a practice that most social actors would perform,

regardless of their place of residence. The importance of this practice for the thesis is to consider whether the shopping practice might or might not encourage social interactions between different social groups living in spatial proximity. Following the ideal type for this practice, it is expected that there are social interactions (non-segregation) between "insiders" and "outsiders" when both groups use the same shopping facilities located in the gated community or in the surrounding local communities. In contrast, there is urban social group segregation when only one social group uses these shopping facilities.

The location of the venues where the gated community's residents did their shopping was the instrument for the analysis of this practice. The shopping facilities considered were: a) those located inside the gated community (like a convenience store); and b) those situated outside in the surrounding areas. Following the theoretical proposition of the research, it is also important to find out not only if there is intended urban social group segregation or not, but also whether this could be a result of the gated community's attributes and the social actors' viewpoints. As in the case of other practices, the use of the shopping facilities by "insiders" is contrasted with the use of these facilities by "outsiders" to see if social interactions between them are prompted or developed.

The information gathered about this practice evidenced that there were no shopping facilities inside Palmares. Therefore, the analysis concentrated on the shopping facilities in the surrounding areas, which were examined according to two different groups: 1) the local shops located in the four neighbourhoods that existed before Palmares was built; and 2) the shopping facilities that were built as a consequence of the construction of the gated community in the area, such as the local shops in *Panamericana Street* and the shopping centre situated next to Palmares.

As far as the shopping facilities of the first group were concerned, there were important differences amongst the four neighbourhoods. There were no shopping facilities in "Altos de la Puntilla". There was only a convenience store and a small hardware retail in "Obras Sanitarias" and one corner shop in "Urundel". Conversely, "Fuchs" had a more diversified supply. There were convenience stores, a butcher's, a bakery, a hardware retail, a stationery shop, a chemist's and some grocery shops. All

these existed before the gated community. Only a few interviewed Palmares' residents used these facilities regularly for shopping. They had been to the hardware shop, to the local grocery stores and to the local butcher's: *"If I have to buy meat or something specific, I go to 'Fuchs'... In the end, I find particular places where it isn't so impersonal... I like that of 'hello, how are you doing?; fine, how's your mum?'..."* (Clara); *"If the supermarket located in the shopping centre is already closed, I go to the stores in 'Trapiche'<sup>129</sup> or 'Fuchs'... The neighbours there are nice but I don't know them"* (Carolina). This last expression shows that although some "insiders" did their shopping in the local areas, this did not necessarily mean social interaction with "outsiders". Víctor, Lidia and Marisa also shopped in the local areas: *"There's a hardware shop in 'Fuchs' ... my wife goes frequently there"* (Víctor); *"I go to 'Fuchs' to buy groceries and meat"* (Lidia); *"There's a bakery two blocks from here in 'Fuchs' where the bread is delicious"* (Marisa). It could be that women were more exposed to potential social interactions with "outsiders" since most residents who went to the local stores for shopping were women. Moreover, there might be more opportunities to meet "Fuchs" residents than other "outsiders" since most shops were located in that neighbourhood.

"Outsiders" used the local shops in their areas and said most "insiders" did not use them: *"It isn't the most common thing to see people from Palmares in the local shops... You usually see people from the neighbourhood ['Fuchs'] in the local shops, but from time to time you see them [Palmares' residents] in particular places like the haberdasher..."* (Lucía). Gema, who also lived in "Fuchs" and had a small kiosk at home, located close to the service entrance of Palmares, commented: *"They ['insiders'] hardly come here. They come only if they need something urgent, like a photocopy. Otherwise, they don't even come through this entrance, they have other entrances"*. For Leopoldo, Palmares' residents *"do not come for shopping in our neighbourhood because they go mainly to 'their' shopping centre"*. This last narrative is interesting since it explicitly recognised that the shopping centre served mainly the gated community's population.

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<sup>129</sup> "Trapiche" is a neighbourhood located next to "Fuchs".

The use of the shopping facilities located in the four outside neighbourhoods provided the possibilities for social interactions, however these possibilities were limited since a few “insiders” used these facilities and also because the possibilities of meeting the members of the outside neighbourhoods varied. Since there were more shopping amenities in “Fuchs”, there were more opportunities to meet this group than the others.

The second group of shopping facilities considered for the analysis were created mainly as a consequence of the construction of Palmares. These included the shops in *Panamericana Street* and the shopping centre. These shopping amenities were mainly targeted at “insiders”. The construction of the gated community brought about new small grocery shops and specialised shops like a pizzas’, a bakery and home-made pasta shops, mainly on *Panamericana Street (San Martín Street)*. They were all used by Palmares’ residents: “*We buy groceries from the supermarket in the shopping centre, but we also buy vegetables in a place called ‘El Quincho’ in Panamericana Street and take-away food from Panamericana... They even deliver food to your house!*” (Esteban). Other people from Palmares added: “*I go to the vegetable shop in Panamericana Street, out of the neighbourhood*” (Carina); and “*I usually buy food in the shops in Panamericana because I come back from the city centre and they’re on my way back home... and also it’s easy to park outside them*” (Amalia).

These new shops were considered as one of the advantages of having the gated community nearby according to “outsiders”, who also used them, although not so often: “*There’re more specialised shops now than before Palmares was built and also the ones that were before Palmares have also benefited from the gated community because they have more costumers now*” (Lucía, from “Fuchs”). Some “outsiders”, especially those of a higher socio-economic level, also shopped in *Panamericana Street*: “*We buy some food in Panamericana. We love the pasta from a shop there and also the ice-creams!*” (Flavia); “*Sometimes we buy take-away pizza from a place nearby in Panamericana street and also fruits and vegetables from a small stall in the street before Palmares, which has cheaper fruits and vogs than the supermarket*” (Gabriel).

“Palmares Open Mall”, the shopping centre next to Palmares was built by the same developer. According to him, *“one big advantage of Palmares is comfort. Nowadays, one prevailing concept is to provide a service area to the gated community, to have a school nearby and a shopping centre; and in this case you also have entertainments... This is all important when choosing a neighbourhood to live in”* (Ruperto). The shopping centre was used by most “insiders”, although some of them acknowledged that it could be more expensive than the retail shops in the city centre. Many residents had stopped going to the other shopping centre that exists in MAM<sup>130</sup> since they moved to Palmares, although there was still an important group of “insiders” who continue using the shopping facilities located in other city areas.

Services offered in the shopping centre covered a wide variety, from food stores, restaurants, coffee-places, cinema, clothes’ shops, supermarket, books and music shops, to gym, discotheque, bank, beauty parlour and health centre. Most interviewed “insiders” used these services: *“I use the shopping centre a lot. I go to the supermarket there... I buy clothes in the mall and I also use the medical centre located there. I go to the GP there and my son goes to the psychologist, language therapist, educational psychologist and even a teacher there!”* (Carla). Marianela said: *“We use the shopping mall a lot. We go to the supermarket there, to the cinema, to the gym...”*.

The supermarket, where they went for everyday supplies, was the most used store by “insiders”: *“I buy basic things here in this supermarket located in the mall, but I don’t buy other more specialised stuff here because there isn’t a great variety... it’s only for everyday supplies”* (Celina). According to inside and outside residents, this supermarket was more expensive than others: *“The supermarket in “Palmares Open Mall” is very expensive because it’s in the mall and then prices are higher because it’s for Palmares’ residents”* (Fernando, another gated community resident). “Insiders” also bought clothes in the stores of the shopping centre: *“Sometimes we buy clothes in the shopping mall”* (Alfonso). Luisa referred to social interaction when she commented why she bought there: *“I always have a look in the stores here in the shopping centre when I need to buy clothes because there’re two or three*

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<sup>130</sup> There were only two shopping centres in MAM. ‘The shopping’ is the other one, located in Guaymallén and built before “Palmares Open Mall”.

*shops where I like the shop-assistants or the owners*". There were no gender differences since both women and men went to "Palmares Open Mall" for shopping. However, it might be that women go more frequently to some shops, like the supermarket. All these opinions illustrate the use of the shopping centre facilities by "insiders", and especially of the supermarket, which was the most frequented store by them.

Some residents of the gated community said they did not go to the city centre anymore since they came to Palmares: *"I lived in the city centre before moving to Palmares and then obviously I run my errands there. Now I go to the centre sometimes only to cash the 'petrom'"*<sup>131</sup>. *Basically I don't go to the centre because I don't need anything from there... and every time I have to drive there, I don't like it. I feel insecure there. The traffic annoys me and also the car windscreen cleaners!"* (Camila). María commented on her experience: *"If I can, I avoid going to the city centre for shopping. You can find everything around here..."*.

The residents of the outside surrounding communities also used the shopping centre and saw it as one of the advantages of having the gated community close to them. Leopoldo, from "Fuchs", commented on the changes in the surroundings brought about by Palmares: *"Of course Palmares means progress. It brought about the shopping mall that's very attractive. We have a supermarket in the mall, food hall, cinema... We could have never thought of something like this 30 years ago when this neighbourhood was built"*. Gabriel provided his opinion about the shopping centre: *"It's very convenient... You have the supermarket, you can go for a coffee there; you can go to the cinema; you can take the kids there. But it isn't there by chance. The mall is there for everybody, but it's particularly there because it provides services that make the gated community of a better category"*. For Griselda: *"the only advantage of Palmares is the shopping mall"*. Rosa, who lived in "Fuchs", commented on her experience: *"We go to the supermarket... a large group of old women, all together, in the morning... And then we come back... It's a walk"*. Lorna referred to the shopping centre as her *"second home"* because *"you have the*

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<sup>131</sup> "Petrom" was the name given to the Mendocinean provincial currency used for about a year in Mendoza during the 2001 crisis. Since there was no money circulation, provincial governments were entitled to issue local currency to pay salaries.

*supermarket, the chemist's, the dry cleaning shop, the stationery shop, you have the basic shops to avoid going to the centre... You also have the health centre that is well equipped...*". Members of the local communities used the shopping centre for going to the supermarket and some occasional entertainment at weekends, as previously mentioned. But most of them could not afford buying clothes or eating in the most expensive restaurants of "Palmares Open Mall": *"Have you seen the prices of clothes in the shopping centre? It's impossible to buy there"* (Griselda, from "Obras Sanitarias").

The residents of "Urundel", the poorest neighbourhood in the surroundings, were the only ones who did not use the shopping facilities in the outside areas that were mainly targeted at the gated community's residents. Lucas, who lived in that neighbourhood, said: *"Palmares hasn't benefited us in any way... but it hasn't harmed us either"*. They did not use the services provided in the shopping centre because they could not afford them: *"I don't go to the shopping centre very often because the clothes there are very expensive, although they are very nice, and you can buy them cheaper in the city centre. Once in a while I might go with my friends for a stroll there. But sometimes they look at you in a bad way because maybe you don't wear the trainers that are in fashion"* (Vanina). This comment by Vanina shows that although access to the shopping centre was not formally restricted, it was symbolically controlled by an implicit dress code and physical appearance and therefore those social groups who did not feel comfortable with that avoided going there.

The analysis of the use of the facilities located in *Panamericana Street* and the shopping centre indicates an unequal use. Most "insiders" were frequent users of most facilities there, especially the supermarket. In the case of the "outsiders", there was a differentiated use according to socio-economic levels: while residents of "Altos de la Puntilla" used many of these facilities, residents of "Fuchs" and "Obras Sanitarias" would only buy in the supermarket and occasionally in another shop, and residents of "Urundel" would hardly ever buy in the shopping centre. This means that although there could be potential social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" because both groups used these shopping facilities, the possibilities of interactions differed according to where "outsiders" lived: there were many

opportunities for social interactions between Palmares' residents and citizens living in "Altos de la Puntilla", less with people from "Fuchs" and "Obras Sanitarias" and almost none with "Urundel"'s residents.

The data gathered for the shopping practice shows that there were no shopping facilities inside Palmares. This could be considered as a positive factor for social interactions with "outsiders" since "insiders" would need to go out of the gated community for their shopping practice. Both "insiders" and "outsiders" used the facilities located in the surrounding communities, including the shopping centre and the shops in *Panamericana Street*. Both social groups went to the local stores to buy food, vegetables, bread and meat. "Insiders" liked shopping in the local shops because they found it more personal with face-to-face interactions. It was also convenient for them money- and time-wise. Both "insiders" and "outsiders" who went to the shopping centre considered it an advantage for the area. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that not all social groups used these shops in the same way and therefore the possibilities for social interactions also varied.

Following the ideal type suggested for this practice, it is not possible to use Table 2.6 as suggested because there were no shopping facilities in Palmares and therefore, the analysis in relation to urban social group segregation has to do with the use (or not use) by "insiders" of the shopping facilities located in the surrounding areas, divided into two categories. Therefore, it is necessary to build a new table. Table 6.2.2 shows there are six outcomes for this practice. There is non-segregation if "insiders" used the shopping facilities located in the four neighbourhoods. It is intended non-segregation if viewpoints are positive (Cell A) and unintended if viewpoints are negative (Cell D). There is also non-segregation when "insiders" use the shops established since the construction of the gated community. There is intended non-segregation if viewpoints are positive (Cell B) and unintended if viewpoints are negative (Cell E). In contrast, there is segregation if "insiders" do not use the facilities located in the local areas, which is unintended when viewpoints are positive (Cell C) and intended when viewpoints are negative (Cell F).



**Table 8.2.1 (4.6): Shopping (I)**

Viewpoints	Social practice Shopping	
	Location of shopping facilities	
	In the surrounding Communities	In the gated community
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

**Table 8.2.2: Shopping (II)**

Viewpoints	Social practice Shopping		
	Use of shopping facilities in the local areas		
	Located in the four neighbourhoods	Built since the construction of the gated community	No use of facilities located in the local areas
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Intended non-segregation (B)	Unintended segregation (C)
Negative	<b>Unintended non-segregation (D)</b>	<b>Unintended non-segregation (E)</b>	Intended segregation (F)

According to Table 8.2.2 the findings of the shopping practice show that in the case of the shops located in the four neighbourhoods, there is **unintended non-segregation** (Cell D) since both groups used them (although “outsiders” more than “insiders”), but there were negative viewpoints about it since although there could be potential social interactions between these groups, it was not pursued by any of them. The use of the shops located in *Panamericana Street* and in the shopping centre also gave the same result. There is also **unintended non-segregation** (Cell E) because both groups used them, however, this did not imply social interactions, but potential ones and these potential interactions were related to the socio-economic level of the “outsiders”.

“Insiders” did not segregate themselves from the surrounding local communities. However, their viewpoints about the other groups were negative and they did not shop in the outside local communities to interact with “outsiders” or to contribute to their local economies, but because it was convenient for them. These processes of potential social interactions could develop especially between women who performed shopping practices more frequently than men. The no availability of

shopping facilities in the gated community encouraged its residents to go outside for the shopping practice, which prompt social interactions.

The outcome of this practice **contradicts the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since the result is the opposite of the expected. There are several elements that need to be considered to understand the outcome of the shopping practice. Within the structural elements, the most important was the socio-economic level of the different social groups, which meant unequal economic resources and consequently unequal access to goods consumption and therefore, unequal opportunities for social interactions. The availability of a diverse range of services and of good quality implied that shopping could be done in the surrounding local areas without "insiders" or "outsiders" needing to go elsewhere. The inexistence of shopping facilities in the gated community obliged its residents to shop outside. Within the individual elements, the preferences of Palmares' residents on where to buy implied more potential opportunities for social interactions as they preferred to shop in areas near their homes. The shopping practice has mainly been considered according to adults who carried out most of the activities related to shopping and took decisions about where to go and what to buy. In contrast, the next practice is about children in primary schools.

### **8.3. Practice 7: Schooling**

The ideal type suggested for this "neighbouring social practice" supposed that children living in spatial proximity were likely to attend the same primary schools and this would prompt social interactions between children living in gated communities and those living in "open neighbourhoods". Similar to other practices, the attributes of the gated community, which in this case refers to the possible availability of inside school facilities, might influence this practice, as well as the viewpoints about it, like the type of education parents want for their children. The analysis of this practice reveals some trends in schooling, especially the growing tendency of private education in Argentina. This makes social differences between those who have access to private (mostly expensive) education and those who do not more evident. Therefore, attending private schools could be seen as a practice that, similar to living in gated communities, emphasises exclusivity, social belonging and maybe also urban social group segregation.

The ideal type suggested for this practice pointed out the need to consider the location of the primary schools attended by children living in Palmares and whether these schools were state or private ones. Therefore, it was important to know the provision of schools in the area where Palmares is located. At the time of the research, there was one state primary school located in “Obras Sanitarias”, next to the brick wall of Palmares, and another state primary school in “Fuchs”. Palmares did not have school amenities.

Children living in Palmares did not attend the state primary schools in the outside surrounding neighbourhoods. Mónica, the headteacher of the school in “Obras Sanitarias”, who also lived in that neighbourhood, confirmed there were no students from Palmares attending that school. The only relationship between that school and the gated community consisted in public works improvements that Palmares had to do as the municipality demanded Palmares build some pavements in an area outside the gated community that was close to the school.

Children in primary education from Palmares attended private schools, showing the increasing tendency of upper- and middle-class families in Argentina to choose private education, with all-day schooling and an emphasis on learning foreign languages. Carla del Cueto (2007) researched on the schooling practices of children living in gated communities in MABA and analysed this shift from state to private education. State education was for a long time considered better than private education in Argentina. Free access to good quality state schools was one of the most important achievements of the government. However, since the 1980s and especially during the 1990s, the quality of state education dramatically decreased due to poor financial support and the meagre salaries of teachers. At the same time, the quality of private education improved and new private schools were established. The main drivers encouraging private education were the rejection of state schools, the importance given to learning the English language, and the relevance given to socialisation with individuals belonging to similar socio-economic levels. According to this author: “The school and the neighbourhood were spaces where the ‘mix’ of different social groups was possible... the socialisation models implied integration based on diversity. Now the dynamic seems to be the opposite, there is a bigger

distance between different social groups and social circles are homogeneous” (del Cueto, 2007).

Some children in primary education from Palmares attended private schools in the city centre before moving to the gated community and did not change school when they moved to Palmares. There was also a large group of children who attended the same private primary school close to Palmares. This school is called “Colegio Integral del Huerto”, commonly known as “El Huerto”, and was created at the beginning of the 1980s as a primary school and only recently expanded to secondary school. It was located close to Palmares, but not in the surrounding areas. Most children were transferred to this private school when they moved to Palmares because it was close to the gated community: *“My children attended a school in Godoy Cruz first, close to where we lived and then we moved here and so they started the following school year in ‘El Huerto’ because it’s close to Palmares”* (Camila). Others had always attended this school since they were already living in the gated community when they started schooling. For Saúl, from Palmares: *“‘El Huerto’ is becoming exclusive because of Palmares... I think that 50 percent of Palmares’ kids currently go to ‘El Huerto’... The school has grown thanks to Palmares...”*. Many of the interviewed residents sent their children to “El Huerto”, confirming what Saúl said. According to Miriam, the headteacher of “El Huerto”, *“20 percent of the school intake comes from Palmares”*.

Parents from Palmares did not think about the possibility of sending their children to the local state primary schools because *“state education is very bad nowadays... It isn’t as it was in my times... I attended a state school and my education was very good”* (Víctor). They also referred to learning other skills and having convenient schedules: *“Children need to learn English now to be able to succeed in their future working life and it is better if they learn it when they start school... I also like the schedule they have...”* (Soledad).

For some parents the location of the school was one of the factors that required some adaptation when moving to Palmares: *“Now that the kids have resumed schooling after the summer holidays we have to re-adapt because they attend the same school as before moving to Palmares, which is in the city centre, and now it’s very far away.”*

*It's an all-day school but my kids went home for the lunch break when we lived in 'La Quinta', but now they have to stay at school for lunch because there is no time for them to come home and go back. We both need to get used to this" (Miguel).*

During the interview with Miriam, she discussed some behavioural problems of children from Palmares: *"Kids want to show that they belong to a particular group and they let you know that they live in Palmares... They're all the time telling the teachers they live in Palmares".* She also referred to their parents: *"Some parents come and say they live in Palmares and they say it because they want their children to be accepted and offered a place in the school. They use that [saying that they live in Palmares] as an element of power".*

This practice has focused on primary education since the election of secondary schools and nurseries in the Argentinean schooling system is influenced by more complex factors (i.e. main discipline, location, schedules and fees) than primary education where there are more similarities between schools. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Rebeca, one of the interviewed teenagers, was an exception in Palmares because she attended one of the state secondary schools that belong to the *Universidad Nacional de Cuyo*, whilst the rest of the interviewed teenagers attended private secondary schools.

In contrast to the situation of Palmares' residents, according to the interviewees most children from the outside local areas attended the local state schools<sup>132</sup>. This indicates that there is no social interaction between "insiders" and "outsiders" since the former did not attend local schools. The school was not a place for interaction between children from Palmares and from the outside local communities. The no availability of a school inside Palmares was not an element that encouraged its residents to use the school infrastructure located in the surrounding local areas, as it happened with the shopping practice. Therefore, this is a situation of urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents, which is influenced by structural factors, like different quality levels of education between private and state schools and social differences that show that those who can afford paying fees in private

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<sup>132</sup> In the case of "Altos de la Puntilla", this information could not be confirmed since there were no children attending primary school within the households interviewed in that neighbourhood.

schools do this to get a better quality education. It is also influenced by individual elements like the parents' choices according to their values and interests. **This situation of urban social group segregation is intended** (Cell D in Table 6.3) since most “insiders” had negative general viewpoints about “outsiders”, as explained for the previous practices. Residents had negative viewpoints about state education and would not like sending their children to the local state schools. The outcome of the schooling practice **supports the theoretical proposition of the thesis**.

**Table 8.3 (4.7): Schooling**

Viewpoints	Social Practice Schooling	
	Location of schools attended	
	In the surrounding communities	In the gated community or other city areas
Positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	<b>Intended segregation (D)</b>

#### **8.4. Practice 8: Religious practices**

Argentina is a secular country but most of its population (more than 90 percent) is Roman Catholic. Religious practices were suggested in Chapter 3 as one of the social practices that might encourage social interactions between different social groups living in spatial proximity. This is a practice that might be performed by citizens, regardless of their place of residence. Therefore, “insiders” and “outsiders” were questioned about their religious practices to find out about the venues they used for this practice and to examine if there were opportunities for social interactions between the two social groups when performing them. In this context, it was relevant to consider the availability of religious infrastructure in the gated community and in the surrounding local areas and also the viewpoints provided by the social actors that explained how and where they performed religious practices.

There were no religious facilities inside Palmares. Most of its population did not practice religious activities. However, some children attended religious schools in the city centre and about 40 percent of the interviewees living in Palmares went to church. Most of these usually went to the local church called “Montserrat” located about 15 blocks away from Palmares or to a chapel and sanctuary called “Shoenstat”

situated behind Palmares. Rosario explained: *"My kids will start this year the preparation for the catechism in Montserrat. It's a good church and is close to Palmares"*. Others said: *"I go to mass in a church in "Chacras" or to the one here, which is called Montserrat and is very close. I like masses there and also the priest"* (Irene); and *"I attend mass every Sunday; I go to Montserrat"* (Pascual, 80-year-old, retired). Within the interviewed "insiders", there were two couples involved in the activities of the local church. Samuel was one of these people: *"We, my wife and I, have different religious activities. We're both Roman Catholics and go to Montserrat and basically that is our church, where we give family catechism. But we also go to another church nearby where we participate in meetings for couples"* (Samuel). These comments show that Palmares' residents used the services provided by the local church and were satisfied with it. Moreover, some residents had an active participation in the religious activities of the local church.

There were only a few residents who went to churches in the city centre: *"We go to "San Vicente Ferrer" church because there is no church close to Palmares!"* (Amadeo); *"We used to go to "Corazón de María" church, in 'La Quinta' because we lived close to that church... We haven't been to mass since we moved to Palmares three months ago"* (Miguel); *"We go to different churches... sometimes we go to Montserrat, the one nearby; and other times we go to "San Agustín" in the city centre... sometimes it depends on where we are ...or with whom we go..."* (Rodrigo). These opinions evidence that some families did not have one favourite church to attend mass and where they went depended on factors such as convenient location in relation to other people with whom they attended mass or to where they were in the city. Most people had attended masses in "Montserrat". Amadeo's justification of where he went to mass showed the lack of knowledge about the surrounding areas of Palmares, despite the fact that he had lived in the gated community for five years.

Palmares had a significant number of Jewish families, which was not a typical situation in Mendoza. The Jewish community went to the only synagogue in MAM, located in the city centre. But none of the interviewees mentioned going there regularly.

“Outsiders” also went to “Montserrat”, the local church and said they knew some people from Palmares from the practice of religious activities. Armando, from “Altos de la Puntilla”, mentioned: *“My wife and I teach family catechism in preparation for the baptism and we have to go to Palmares to see people there as well as to “Urundel””*. Lucia attended masses in the local church and also used to participate in teaching catechism to children. When asked about meeting people from Palmares at church, she said: *“There is no doubt that many people from Palmares come here to the church, but you don’t distinguish them... you see familiar faces, but you don’t know that they live in Palmares”*. These narratives show that religious practices might encourage social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders”.

Worship in Argentina is driven by faith and not a compulsory activity. Religious practices represent opportunities for social interactions between different social groups. The examination of the religious practices by Palmares’ residents evidences that since many of them went to the local church in the surrounding communities and there were also people involved in catechism and teaching there, this provided situations for social interactions with “outsiders”. The latter also attended the local church, and similar to some couples from the gated community, there were also couples living in the surrounding neighbourhoods who taught catechism and family dynamics to some Palmares’ residents. Thus, religious practices contributed to non-segregation between “insiders” and “outsiders”. In addition, when both social groups commented about religious practices, there were positive viewpoints about the other social groups living in spatial proximity. Therefore, although the general viewpoints of “insiders” about “outsiders” were negative, as previously explained for other practices, in this case the particular viewpoints were positive and this practice might be considered as a tool to fostering social interactions with residents from the local areas. Consequently, following Table 8.4 the religious practices by Palmares’ residents contributed to **intended non-segregation** (Cell A) since both groups were positive about the social interactions resulting from performing these practices.



**Table 8.4 (4.8): Religious practices**

Viewpoints	Social practice Religious practices	
	Location of religious institutions	
	In the surrounding communities	In the gated community or in other city areas
Positive	<b>Intended non-segregation (A)</b>	Unintended segregation (B)
Negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

This result **contradicts the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since the religious practices did not lead to intended urban social group segregation. There are several factors conditioning this result. First, the non-availability of religious infrastructure inside the gated community obliged its residents to go out and use the services provided in the local areas or elsewhere, prompting social interactions with “outsiders”. The existence of a local church close to Palmares where “insiders” felt comfortable and liked the service meant that they could perform this practice there. In addition to these structural factors, there were also individual elements, such as the particular interests and likes of the residents that led them to attend masses in one church and not another one. Although there were no explicit intentions to interact with “outsiders”, the viewpoints about the local church and the people who attended masses there were positive and conscious that people from different nearby neighbourhoods, including Palmares, went to the same local church. This practice then prompted social interactions and contributed to intended non-segregation. Nevertheless, it has to be pointed out that this result is limited since not all Palmares’ residents performed religious practices.

### **8.5. Practice 9: Sports**

Playing sports is a common practice for some people, regardless of their gender, age or socio-economic level. There are usually parks and community areas in different parts of the city to practise sports. Thus, it is expected that this practice contributes to social interactions between members of different social groups who live in spatial proximity. According to the ideal type suggested for this practice, its examination is considered through the analysis of the use of sport facilities, assuming that if “insiders” and “outsiders” use the same sport venues, this should either prompt or develop social interactions between them. Therefore, the different locations of these

venues were divided into two groups: a) located in the gated community; and, b) located in the surrounding communities. The data gathered showed age differences for the use of sport venues. Similar to the socialisation practice, the analysis of this practice considers not only the venues, but also the residents' age and their viewpoints in addition to the attributes of the gated community related to this practice. It also considers the sport practice of "outsiders".

At the time of the research, as mentioned in Chapter 5, Palmares had a clubhouse used for social and sport activities like gym classes. There were also an open-air swimming pool, two tennis courts and a football pitch close to the clubhouse. A jogging circuit ran round the residential compound. There was a "summer school" for children at the clubhouse. Palmares had good quality sports amenities in contrast to other gated communities in MAM. Residents had to pay extra fees to use them and considered the fees for the use of the facilities in Palmares not expensive: *"The membership for the swimming pool is very cheap; you pay \$150 per season for the whole family, whereas I paid \$200 for my family in "El Círculo Médico" <sup>133</sup>"* (Clara).

These facilities could only be used by Palmares' residents and their relatives or friends accompanied by residents. Non-residents were not allowed to use them. The majority of the interviewed residents and their families used the sport amenities located in Palmares, especially the swimming pool, the jogging circuit and the tennis courts. However, there were age, but no gender differences. Many of the adults used the sport facilities in the gated community: *"We walk inside Palmares. It's very important that you can go out of your house and walk. There's a circuit that goes around the perimeter that you can use for cycling or walking. My husband cycles there and I go for walks"* (Celina); *"I love walking and I couldn't do it in the city centre for security reasons and I can do it here in the gated community"* (Eva); *"I go for a walk after dinner... at 10pm, 11pm or even midnight and you walk very relaxed around the neighbourhood... This is priceless! The streets are like an extension of your house"* (Lidia); *"I used to have tennis classes with a teacher here, but the teacher left ... Now the tennis tournament has started again... My husband also*

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<sup>133</sup> "El Círculo Médico" is a sport club located in Capital.

*played tennis here... We also use the clubhouse, particularly the swimming pool, in the summer"* (Adela).

The swimming pool was mainly used by those adults who did not have a swimming pool at home: *"Last summer I used the swimming pool of the clubhouse because I don't have one at home"* (Marisa). Sports played in the gated community used the common infrastructure available in Palmares. Nevertheless, there were two cases of residents who mentioned they practised sports in the private areas (their houses): *"Some times we meet here in my house, with other residents, and a gym teacher comes and we do aerobics"* (Amalia). Also Soledad, who belonged to one of the new-rich families in the gated community and had a gym inside her eight-plot house, commented: *"I have a gym inside my house and we [she and other friends from Palmares] meet here"*. There were some adult residents who did not use the sport amenities of Palmares because of lack of time or because they used sport amenities in other city areas. For instance, Juan said: *"I don't practise any sport. I don't have the time for this"*; and Enrique explained: *"There is a clubhouse here in the gated community, but myself and my family, we still go to the same sport club where we went before moving to Palmares because my life hasn't changed... I still meet my friends to play football even though it's far away and I have a football pitch here in Palmares that I haven't used yet"*. These testimonies show that many inside adults used the sport facilities of the gated community.

Children, as pointed out by their parents, also used them: *"My kids spend the whole day playing outside the house. They play tennis or go to the swimming pool in the clubhouse and they spend the whole day with their friends. And they also have the football pitch to entertain themselves"* (Alfonso). Graciela commented on the different use of the sports facilities by her and her children: *"I don't go to the swimming pool in the clubhouse because I have a swimming pool at home, but my kid went on his own in the summer time to meet his friends there. It's a safe place and he can go on his own. You know that someone is going to take care of him and that there are only people from Palmares and not strangers... My son also plays football and tennis here in Palmares... and my daughter goes to the 'summer school'"*. Samuel commented on some of the advantages of having a clubhouse in the gated community: *"We have a private club where we can take the kids to, where*

*I feel safer. It's very close, they go walking or by bike and it's an environment where we know all those who live here... This is very positive...*". The last narratives subtly indicate that gated community's residents like having a place that is not open to everybody and they feel safer when it is an exclusive environment.

A football school was established in Palmares in 2003. Samuel elaborated on this: *"A teacher comes to train the kids. There are different categories from 6 to 18 years old"*. They had played against school teams, but *"it's not even a tournament. They aren't identified as the football team of Palmares. There's no corporate spirit yet"* (Samuel). This activity could become a way of fostering children's participation in sports and could prompt social interactions with children from other city areas, and maybe also from those living in spatial proximity. However, it was not likely that all residents would agree on having children from other neighbourhoods playing inside Palmares because of the security measures, as discussed later in this section.

The comments given by adults on how their children used the sport facilities located in the gated community show that children used them very often and in some cases more frequently than their parents, mainly because they had more free time. In contrast to children and adults, young adults did not use these sport facilities often because they used those located in other city areas: *"I play 'paddle'<sup>134</sup> with my friends in other city areas because there is no paddle court here in Palmares and also because my friends don't live in the gated community"* (Gerardo); *"I practise 'kempo', which is a Japanese martial art, in a venue in Godoy Cruz"* (Lionel); *"I go to a gym in Chacras"* (Rebeca). Similar to what was found for other practices, this age group had weaker links with the gated community and kept more relationships with friends and activities in other city areas.

In contrast to the situation of young adults, children and adults practised more sports inside the gated community because they appreciated the security provided inside Palmares. As the views previously given by Samuel and Graciela show, Palmares' residents valued knowing that facilities and infrastructure could not be used by non-residents because that made them feel safer. The main obstacle for sharing sports

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<sup>134</sup> "Paddle" is a sport that derives from tennis.

facilities with non-residents was security, which influenced all activities performed by Palmares' residents and evidenced their fear of crime.

There was an idea about converting the clubhouse into a private sport club so non-residents also could become members. Marianela provided her opinion on this: *"I heard there was a possibility... but there is nothing officially... because there is no infrastructure for that... The clubhouse would have to be enlarged, they would have to build more rooms and they said they would build a place for massages... It could be... I wouldn't oppose it if they take care of the security... but it's not possible with the current security devices... Services would have to be improved with more security staff..."*. Samuel, a member of A.Pro.CUP, who became its president in 2004<sup>135</sup>, added: *"In all A.Pro.CUP meetings, we've rejected the proposal that the clubhouse could be used by non-residents due to the fear that anybody could enter the gated community. Because of the location of the clubhouse, if non-residents go to it, they have to go across the whole settlement. There is no way of isolating the clubhouse and therefore we couldn't control the entrance very well and we wouldn't have a very good security protection inside the gated community"*.

This idea of transforming the clubhouse into a private sport club to be made available also for non-residents did not succeed. The particular viewpoints about this practice show that for security reasons, non-residents were not allowed to use the inside sport amenities. The use would have implied social interactions with people living outside Palmares. However, it would be unlikely that it would have fostered social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" since the latter would not be able to afford the membership for the use of this sport club, with the exception of "Altos de la Puntilla"'s residents. In addition, as mentioned for the other practices, there were mainly negative general viewpoints about the members of the outside local communities. "Outsiders" were asked if they had ever used the sports facilities of Palmares and none of those interviewed had used them. According to one of the residents of "Altos de la Puntilla", *"It would be great to have the possibility of using the clubhouse of Palmares in the summer time. It's so close to my home that it'd be very convenient. But we don't have access to Palmares"* (Amanda).

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<sup>135</sup> See footnote 120, Chapter 7.

The analysis of the use of sports facilities located in the gated community by their residents shows that most of them used them. Although there were no gender differences regarding this practice since both men and women used them similarly, there were differences related to the residents' age. Children (younger than 15-year-old) used more the inside facilities because they had more free time than adults, it was practical distance-wise and they did not need to ask their parents to drive them there. Moreover, most adults also used these facilities. However, young adults did not use these facilities often because they had kept their friends and activities from when they did not live in Palmares. "Outsiders" were not allowed to use these facilities on the grounds of keeping a controlled access and security in the gated community. Therefore, this practice did not contribute to social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders". Before reaching a conclusion for the whole practice, it is necessary to examine the use of the sport facilities in the local communities by both "insiders" and "outsiders".

The surrounding local communities were the second venue suggested for sports practice. The facilities available there included a few gyms located in "Fuchs", one in *Panamericana Street* and one in the shopping centre located next to Palmares. Only a few adult residents carried out sport activities there. Three of the interviewed residents from Palmares had been to a gym in "Fuchs" or the one in *Panamericana Street*: *"I go to a gym located in Panamericana Street because it's close to home and the schedule of the classes is convenient for me"* (Julieta); *"I go to a gym in "Fuchs" because it's cheaper"* (Camila); *"I go to a gym in "Fuchs" because I like it and because I couldn't afford going to the gym in the shopping centre, which is very expensive... just because it's in the mall!"* (Alejandra). A few others, like Rosario, went to the shopping centre: *"I go to a gym in the shopping mall"* (Rosario). The use of sport facilities in the outside communities might prompt social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders". Nevertheless, this use was not widely spread amongst "insiders". There were only a few adults, especially women, and no children or young adults who used these facilities.

Members of the outside communities used sport facilities located in their local areas. Lucía who lived in "Fuchs" commented about her daughter: *"Candela practises gym here in the local school. The gym teacher rents the school and gives private classes*

*there... Last year they qualified for a national tournament of aerobics". Liliana said: "I go to a gym that is very close to my home. It's also in "Fuchs". But I have no idea if there are people from Palmares who go there... although I don't think so... because they might prefer going to the shopping mall or other gyms trendier than this one". Lorna and Flavia, who lived in "Altos de la Puntilla", went to the gym located in the shopping centre: "I go to the gym that is in the shopping mall. I like the teacher there and it's open until late... There are some people from Palmares who also go there" (Flavia). The narratives provided by "insiders" and "outsiders" about the use of the sports amenities located in the surrounding areas evidence that only few people living in Palmares used them. In these circumstances, there were scarce possibilities for social interactions with "outsiders".*

The analysis of this "neighbouring social practice" shows that "insiders" used sport facilities mainly located in the gated community. Only a few interviewed "insiders" used facilities located in the neighbouring communities. "Outsiders" did not use the sports facilities inside Palmares because they were not allowed to do so. Some "outsiders" used the sport amenities available in their local areas, including the shopping centre. The possibilities of social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" were limited. "Insiders" did not approve the use of the inside facilities by non-residents for security reasons. There were no particular positive viewpoints about the possibility of social interactions as a consequence of sharing sport amenities between "insiders" and "outsiders". Particular viewpoints about this practice were related to individual factors like people who preferred to use sport facilities in Palmares as it was more convenient distance-wise and they felt safer. This was especially significant in the case of the children's sport practices. Moreover, similar to other practices, general viewpoints about the other social group were negative.

Following Table 8.5 suggested for this ideal type, the sport practice contributed to **intended urban social group segregation by Palmares' residents** (Cell D in Table 8.5) because most "insiders" used only the inside sport facilities and "outsiders" were not allowed to use them. There were also negative viewpoints. This implied that there were no intentions of encouraging social interactions between the two social groups.

**Table 8.5 (4.9): Sports**

Viewpoints	Social practice Sports	
	Location of sports facilities	
	In the surrounding communities	In the gated community or in other city areas
Other group as positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Other group as negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	Intended segregation (D)

The outcome of this practice leads to the **support of the theoretical proposition of the thesis**. Viewpoints are responsible for this result, but also the sport facilities of the gated community and the existence of strict access and rules, which are some of the attributes of gated communities. The availability of sports facilities inside Palmares encouraged their residents to avoid going outside its premises and interacting with non-residents. The existence of a code of behaviour and strict security devices that did not allow non-residents to use inside amenities discouraged social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders”. These were the most important structural elements influencing this practice. Individual preferences about where and with whom to practise sports were the individual elements involved. The next section analyses the last "neighbouring social practice".

#### **8.6. Practice 10: Use of public transport**

The use of public transport is a practice encouraged by some governments to contribute to more sustainable cities. It would also prompt social interactions between citizens. Nevertheless, in some cities public transport is not efficient and its use is segmented according to socio-economic levels. Those who can afford private transport would then avoid public transport.

The ideal type of this practice suggested that this is a "neighbouring social practice" that is not related to the particular nature of living in gated communities, but is a practice that should be performed by most citizens, if there is a good provision of public transport. This practice should encourage social interactions between people living in spatial proximity. Following the ideal type for this practice, the examination focuses on whether Palmares' residents used public transport or not and this is compared with the situation of “outsiders”. The analysis considers the use of public



transport by age groups, as well as the viewpoints and the attributes influencing this practice.

Adela, a Spanish resident of Palmares, was accustomed to use public transport in her home country. She reflected about her use of public transport in Mendoza: *"I use the bus a lot... even with my children because I want to show them how to use it... Moreover, it's easier to use public transport. I have a car but when I go to the city centre, instead of having to find a place to park, I go by bus... But I've never seen anybody from the gated community on the bus"* (Adela). Public transport could not go inside the gated community. "Insiders", along with non-residents who worked in Palmares, had to go out of the gated community and walked a few blocks to one of the bus stops in the surrounding neighbourhoods if they wanted or needed to use public transport. Samuel, from A.Pro.CUP, commented: *"Public transport inside the gated community would be unthinkable for security reasons. We couldn't control buses going in and out and their passengers"*.

There was a good public transport service in the surrounding areas that was used by most people working in Palmares, like guards, gardeners and home-helpers. But it was not used by most "insiders". However, there were some differences when age groups were analysed. Children from Palmares did not use public transport. Their parents took them to school by car everyday. For instance, Carla explained her routine: *"I take my kids to the school by car everyday. The school is in the city centre. I drive 120 kilometres every day! I prefer this because I'm more relaxed. I think they could be abducted if they take the bus to go to school"*. This shows that some Palmares' residents were afraid of kidnappings and robberies, even if these were exaggerated<sup>136</sup>. In some cases, parents organised "pools" to take a group of children attending the same school altogether: *"I take my kids to school by car at 7am everyday. Sometimes I can arrange this with another mum and then we take turns... There are other children here in Palmares who attend the same school... I do the same when I take the children to the English classes in the afternoon... I try to combine this with someone else... Now this year that I'm pregnant I won't be able to drive so I'll have to contract a service of private transport that will pick them up"*

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<sup>136</sup> Extortive kidnaps became common after the 2001 crisis, especially in Buenos Aires. However, they were not very likely to happen in intermediate cities like Mendoza.

*here at home and will take them to school. They're too small for buses and the service is horrible!"* (Graciela).

Since children who lived in the gated community did not use public transport, an interviewed parent asked himself: *"Who from Palmares' children knows what is to take a bus? Who knows what is to take a tram? No one does. The other day I went with my kid to take the tram, for her to know what to take a tram is. Otherwise she never takes any tram..."* (Victor). Another parent commented on his experience: *"I'm trying to take my daughters to school by bus at least once a week for them to have the chance to manage to go later on their own and get used to the bus. I want to give them some independence"* (José). However, these were two isolated experiences and according to interviewed "insiders" most children from Palmares had never used public transport and depended on adults to move outside the gated community: *"I have to take my children by car everywhere... to school, to karate, to social activities... they depend on me or my husband to go anywhere... maybe they could use the bus when they grow up but they're very small now"* (Carolina).

Teenagers and young people in their 20s took public transport more often: *"I go everywhere by bus... or I walk"* (Fernando); *"I take the bus sometimes. I also borrow my mum's car sometimes or my friends come to pick me up... If I have to take the bus, my mum or my brother take me by car to the bus stop which is outside Palmares and when I come back, I stop at the guardhouse and phone home for someone to come and fetch me there... or sometimes I just walk back home from the entrance"* (Julieta). Constanza occasionally took the bus *"to go to the city centre or visit a friend"*. Patricia Rojas (2007), in her research on teenagers living in gated communities in MABA, illustrates the case of an 18-year-old girl who did not know how to take a bus. Not all teenagers in Palmares used public transport. Alejandra, who had two 15-year-old sons, took them to school everyday: *"My kids used to go to school by bus. I drove them to the bus stop outside Palmares and they took the bus there. However, one day after I had taken them to the bus stop I saw a guy in his bike outside the gated community who was suspiciously looking towards the inside of Palmares. It was the time when there were many "express abductions"<sup>137</sup>. Because I*

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<sup>137</sup> There were many "express abductions" (a type of extortive abductions), especially in Buenos Aires in 2001 and 2002 as a consequence of the economic crisis. They were called express because

*had a very bad presentment, I went back to the bus stop and the same guy was talking to my children. I panicked and asked my children to get in the car and took them to school and since then I take them by car everyday*". Similar to what Carla said above, this comment shows the vulnerability of "insiders" to insecurity and fear of crime.

Adults hardly ever used public transport. Inés gave a reason for this: *"If you want to take a bus, you have to walk at least six blocks from my house, which is closer, but if you live up [in the second stage of Palmares] you'll have to walk at least 10 to 20 blocks... It'll take you a long time and it isn't comfortable..."*. Celina also justified not using public transport: *"Basically because I have a car and when I needed to use public transport I had to take two buses... If you're coming from the city centre, there is a direct bus to here, but if you're coming from elsewhere, you have to take one bus towards the centre and then another one from the centre to here... I had my car in a mechanic garage for a month and I experienced public transport and it's not good..."*. This resident also expressed her agreement with not having public transport inside the neighbourhood *"because it pollutes, and it's noisy... I think it's excellent that there are no buses here... I'd prefer sacrificing myself and walk outside but not having buses inside..."* (Celina).

Palmares' adult residents used their cars to go everywhere. Many households had at least two vehicles. Only three interviewees (or their partners) used or had used public transport. In two of these cases the reason was that they had only one vehicle and, as Clara said, Palmares *"is a type of neighbourhood for those who can have at least two cars"* to be able to move comfortably. The other person who used public transport was Adela, the Spanish resident mentioned at the beginning of this section. All these people were women. There were no interviewed adult men who used public transport, with the exception of José, who took his children to school by bus once a week, as already explained. This contributed to maintain traditional roles where the car is linked to the male figure and in case of having only one vehicle, it is more likely that the man would use it. The examination of this practice shows that the use of public transport was not a popular practice amongst Palmares' residents. Very few

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sometimes abductors took their upper- or middle-class victims to cash machines to withdraw as much money as possible and then freed them.

residents had used public transport, apart from young people and teenagers who used it on a regular basis, while children hardly ever used it.

Some residents mentioned that they would like to have a service of private transport inside the neighbourhood to commute to the city centre. Marianela mentioned that one criticism about Palmares was the lack of private transport: *"When I moved to Palmares, the developers said there would be more services inside... like private transport for the neighbourhood"*. It is worth mentioning that "Dalvian", the oldest gated community in MAM, has a service of private transport. The possibility of having a private transport was analysed by Palmares' management and costs were evaluated considering that the potential beneficiaries would be not only residents but also for home-helpers. However, it was not implemented.

In contrast to the situation of "insiders", most outside residents used public transport to go to work or to the city centre as most outside households had only one or none vehicle: *"I go to work by bus because my husband uses the only car we have as he works far away. Public transport is ok and you have many different buses to come here"* (Lucía). Some families did not have a car, especially in "Urundel". "Altos de la Puntilla"'s residents used public transport less frequently than other "outsiders" because some of them had two cars per household: *"We don't use public transport because we have two cars and it's enough because we're only two adults and the baby"* (Lorna).

The examination of this practice shows that there are gender and age differences. Children and male adults did not use public transport; a few adult women had occasionally used the public transport and some teenagers and young adults used it more frequently. There were individual and structural factors, including the attributes of the gated community that influenced this practice. The main reasons for not using public transport were individual opinions since "insiders" said public transport was uncomfortable and not safe. These depended on the social actors' viewpoints since most "outsiders" used public transport and considered it a good service. The no use of public transport by "insiders" was also constrained by structural factors, such as their socio-economic level that allowed them to have their own vehicles and not needing to use public transport. Cultural and social factors were also significant in a

city where most middle and upper-middle residents were supposed to move in the city by car and not by public transport. Most “insiders” did not use public transport, as opposed to many “outsiders” who regularly used it. Also the attributes of the gated community meant that public transport was not allowed within its premises on the grounds of breaching the security services and the controlled access. All these elements led to the no use of public transport by Palmares’ residents and therefore, the lack of social interactions between different groups who lived in spatial proximity.

Following the ideal type suggested for this practice, the use of public transport contributed to **intended urban social group segregation** by Palmares’ residents (Cell D in Table 8.6) since the latter had negative viewpoints about “outsiders” and about the use public transport and were not interested in using it. Conversely, they would like to have a service of private transport, which is another evidence of the increasing process of privatisation related to living in gated communities. This outcome **supports the theoretical proposition of the thesis** since the practice contributes to intended urban social group segregation which is reinforced by the viewpoints of Palmares’ residents and also by the attributes of the gated community.

**Table 8.6 (4.10): Use of public transport**

Viewpoints	Social Practice Use of public transport	
	Used by both groups	Used by only one group
Other group as positive	Intended non-segregation (A)	Unintended segregation (B)
Other group as negative	Unintended non-segregation (C)	<b>Intended segregation (D)</b>

## 8.7. Conclusions

This chapter continued with the examination of the “neighbouring social practices” by gated communities’ residents started in Chapter 7. It focused on the second group of practices (Group B), which are those related to urban life in general and carried out by most citizens, regardless of living in “open neighbourhoods” or gated communities. This group included six “neighbouring social practices” that were all expected to encourage social interactions between different social groups as a consequence of living in spatial proximity. In contradistinction with this, the

theoretical proposition of the thesis supported a different argument. According to it, "neighbouring social practices" by gated communities' residents lead to intended urban social group segregation by this social group as a consequence of their viewpoints and the attributes of the gated community.

The ideal types suggested in Chapter 3 were used for the analysis of these practices and proved to be useful tools, with the exception of the ideal type for the shopping practice which was modified because it considered the existence of shopping facilities in the gated community. Palmares did not have shopping facilities and therefore the analysis focused on whether its residents used the shopping facilities of the outside local communities or not. Consequently, a new table for this practice was elaborated in this chapter.

In all cases the results of the social practices were influenced by both individual and structural elements. The analysis of schooling, sports and the use of transport supported the theoretical proposition of the thesis since there was intended urban social group segregation by the gated community's residents. The attributes of the gated community that conditioned these results were the no availability of inside school facilities, the controlled access, the existence of inside sport amenities, and the code of behaviour. In addition, particular viewpoints on these practices did not show any intentions to foster social interactions with "outsiders" and there were negative general viewpoints about the latter.

In contrast, the analysis of shopping and religious practices contradicted the theoretical proposition of the thesis because they did not encourage intended urban social group segregation. Nevertheless, they had different outcomes. The shopping practice encouraged unintended non-segregation because both "insiders" and "outsiders" shared the shopping facilities situated in the local outside communities and that prompted social interactions. However, this non-segregation was not particularly intended since viewpoints were not positive and there was no real interest in encouraging social relations between "insiders" and "outsiders". Most "insiders" who went shopping in the surrounding communities did this for convenience. In the case of the religious practices, they contributed to intended non-segregation. The local church appeared as a place for social interactions between

different social groups. Both "insiders" and "outsiders" were involved in religious activities in the local church and there were particular positive viewpoints about this. However, the impact of this practice is limited as only some Palmares' residents carried out religious practices.

Finally, the practice of social relations and venues for socialisation gave two different results according to the venue used for socialisation. The use of the gated community as a place for socialising with friends resulted in intended urban social group segregation because "outsiders" could not use these facilities due to the attributes of the gated community and there were also negative viewpoints about them. Thus, this supported the theoretical proposition of the thesis. On the other hand, the use of the shopping centre for socialisation contradicted this theoretical proposition because it resulted in unintended non-segregation with "insiders" using this facility located in the surrounding area, which prompted social interactions with "outsiders".

"Neighbouring social practices" were expected to encourage social interactions between social groups living in spatial proximity. However, some of them led to the opposite. Considering the results of the practices examined in this chapter, along with the outcomes of Chapter 7, the next chapter concludes by putting them together and relating them with the research questions of the thesis.

**CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS:**  
**THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN GATED COMMUNITIES**  
**AND URBAN SOCIAL GROUP SEGREGATION**

Gated communities have multiplied in urban landscapes worldwide over the last years. Bearing in mind that there is no universal definition for these settlements, the thesis has defined them as closed urban residential settlements voluntarily occupied by a homogeneous social group, where public space has been privatised by restricting access through the implementation of security devices. Gated communities are conceived as closed settlements from their inception and are designed with the intention of providing security to their residents and prevent penetration by non-residents; their houses are of high quality and have services and amenities that can be used only by their residents, who pay regular compulsory maintenance fees. They have a private body governing and enforcing internal rules concerning behaviour and construction.

The expansion of gated communities has been justified as a measure against increasing urban crime rates. The main motive for residents moving to a gated community is mostly having more security and feeling safe. However, the feeling of protection extends to more than being robbed. It is related to allowing children to play in the street, not having industrial or commercial buildings located next to their houses and ensuring that there is some sort of social homogeneity that is mainly related to economic level.

The development of gated communities has engendered several types of consequences. This thesis focused on their social consequences, and especially on the process of urban social group segregation by their residents. It has been guided by two main questions: Is there a relationship between living in gated communities and urban social segregation? And if there is, how can this be explained?

The literature reviewed showed that there is an ongoing theoretical debate on the relationship between gated communities and segregation. However, it has not been



possible to establish whether gated communities encourage segregation or not, and how the relationship between these two concepts can be explained. The thesis therefore argues that it is essential to consider urban social group segregation as a micro-scale process where the object of study is the social group that segregates itself from other groups living in spatial proximity to explain this relationship. Urban social group segregation was defined as the separation of a social group from other groups living in spatial proximity, expressed through the absence of social interactions between them. Social interactions refer to direct interchanges of communication, experiences, viewpoints and activities between individuals and groups. Since there was no conceptual framework to analyse urban social group segregation in relation to living in gated communities, the thesis built a theoretical framework based on structuration theory and added other elements. Four concepts constituted the core of this framework: gated communities, social practices, viewpoints and urban social group segregation.

Social practices and viewpoints were used in this thesis as tools to explain the process of urban social group segregation carried out by gated communities' residents. Social practices and viewpoints are influenced by structural elements and also condition the latter. The thesis focused on the analysis of "neighbouring social practices", defined as regular, conscious, recognised and collective actions performed by different social actors living in spatial proximity to satisfy their interests and needs. They lead to either social interaction or lack of interaction between "insiders" and "outsiders". Viewpoints were defined as values, feelings, attitudes and knowledge held by social actors. They help to explain how social practices are performed and to examine their consequences, which could either be social interaction or urban social group segregation, and both of these consequences could be intended or unintended. There is intended non-segregation when both social groups interact between themselves and the viewpoints of one group about the other as well as the particular viewpoints about social practices are positive. There is unintended non-segregation when there are social interactions between different social groups, but these have not been pursued because the viewpoints are negative. Urban social group segregation is intended when there are no social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" and this lack of social interaction is pursued because there are negative viewpoints. In contrast, urban social group segregation is

unintended when there are no social interactions between different social groups, but social actors have positive viewpoints about the social practices and the other group and therefore this lack of interaction is not planned or desired by them.

Ten "neighbouring social practices" were examined: 1) use of public space with restricted access; 2) institutional communication between inside and outside communities; 3) charity work benefiting the outside poor communities; 4) job provision for outside communities; 5) social relations and venues for socialisation; 6) shopping; 7) schooling; 8) religious practices; 9) sports; and 10) use of public transport. These practices were divided into two groups: Group A comprised practices 1 to 4, and referred to social practices originated by the gated community itself and influenced by its attributes. Group B included practices 5 to 10, which were practices that could be performed by any citizen as part of her/his everyday life.

The research followed a qualitative methodology with a case study strategy. Palmares, a gated community located in the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza, Argentina, was selected as the case study. It is located in the Municipality of Godoy Cruz, surrounded by older neighbourhoods with residents from different social strata, including an informal settlement. The construction of Palmares, along with a shopping centre next to it, greatly modified the urban landscape of the area and produced social contrasts between poor or middle-class neighbourhoods and Palmares' residents. There were 260 families living in the gated community at the time of the research.

Palmares is a gated community with high security devices, such as fingerprints scanning for access, a large group of security staff, CCTV cameras, full-closed walled or fenced perimeter. There is a code of conduct related to the residents' behaviour and building regulations. A homeowners' association administers the neighbourhood and enforces the code of conduct. A manager supervises the work of the security and administrative staff as well as dealing with everyday issues within the premises. Palmares staff is paid with the funds obtained from the regular maintenance fees charged to its residents. The group of residents is homogeneous when compared with the society as a whole. This homogeneity is mainly based on

their socio-economic level. However, the research also showed that there were different lifestyles inside Palmares. Residents carried out different social practices and also had different viewpoints.

Upon analysing gated communities and the relation with urban social group segregation, the research considered three main elements: attributes of the gated community, which refer to the features that characterise this type of settlement; viewpoints from the gated community's residents and other actors shedding light on how life in a gated community is and on issues such as status, social differences and discrimination; and "neighbouring social practices" and their viewpoints to find out whether they encourage segregation or not.

The analysis of how Palmares was built and how life within its premises was when the fieldwork research was conducted showed a series of contradictions regarding: a) the privatisation of urban space; b) the position of the government; c) the relation with the government; d) the use of services and infrastructure provided by the city; e) security as the main justification for moving to a gated community although insecurity was not a major concern at the time some families moved there; f) status as an important reason for moving to gated communities, but denied as a personal justification. These contradictions may apply not only to this case study, but also to other gated communities.

a) The construction of Palmares caused the closure of its streets to the public and restricted its use to its residents, guests and workers. However, these streets were public and their closure meant that there was a restricted use of them that could be considered as a privatisation of the public space. The paradoxical situation was produced because streets were public, but its use was restricted and therefore they became like private space. This denotes the contradictions created through the expansion of such settlements, where only a few benefit and the vast majority of the society remains outside.

b) Another contradiction appears in relation to the position of the government towards gated communities and planning. Many local governments are opposed to gated communities because of their negative impacts, but at the same time favour

them as they signify revenues or city areas improvements, especially in a context of scarce financial resources for municipalities.

c) A third contradiction also concerning governments refers to the relationship between gated communities and governments. On the one hand, there is increasing privatisation related to living in gated communities, evidenced through the existence of a private body (the residents' association) governing the gated community, private rules and private sanctions undermining the role of the state, while on the other, gated communities are unable to break the ties to the government and need its decision on planning regulations and legislation.

d) Palmares' residents had close relationships with the city in general, especially with the city centre, where they worked and some residents attended school and university. They were also served by other areas of the city since not all their needs were satisfied by the gated community itself or by the services in the surrounding areas. The idea of gated communities as "self-contained worlds" does not seem to be possible, at least in the context of intermediate cities like Mendoza, where distance is not a major concern and citizens regularly commute to the city centre. Nevertheless, residents remain within gated communities, without making their voices heard for better public services and infrastructure for the use of the society as a whole.

e) and f) Security was mentioned as the main structural cause for moving to gated communities. However, in the case of Palmares, many families moved there before crime rates and urban insecurity became a major concern. It is therefore interesting that "insiders" gave social status a significant role as a reason for living in a gated community. However, they all said that although they knew people who had moved there to acquire a higher status, this was not their situation.

Social bonds amongst inside residents were not strong. There were few exceptions as sometimes residents had closer relationships with people living on the same street. However, there were strong bonds amongst those who were friends before moving to Palmares and either moved there by coincidence or this was explicitly pursued. There were scarce relationships with outside residents, regardless of their social strata, age and gender. Palmares' residents were not interested in building social bonds with

outside local residents. Moreover, in the case of those social practices that could have prompted closer relationships, such as institutional communication or charity work, they were both mediated by third parties, like the local church, the local government or the manager of Palmares.

The examination of viewpoints also helped to understand the relationship with the outside local communities. The ways residents perceived themselves and the members of the surrounding communities indicated that there were symbolic barriers for social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders”. Issues of feeling discriminated against appeared not only within “outsiders”, but also within “insiders”, as well as feelings of resentment. The charity work was a way of protecting themselves and minimising these social resentments due to an unequal distribution of resources, especially considering the polarity gated community-informal settlement and the consequences of the 2001 crisis in Argentina. Some social actors considered the deepening of social divides and contrasts as a result of the expansion of gated communities. However, most “insiders” and “outsiders” refused to accept this and said that increasing social differences were a major consequence of structural conditions of society and not directly related to the multiplication of gated communities.

The focus of the thesis was the relationship between urban social group segregation and living in gated communities analysed through social practices and viewpoints. Most analysed social practices carried out by Palmares’ residents led to intended urban social group segregation (six out of ten practices<sup>138</sup>) because there were no social interactions between “insiders” and “outsiders” when performing these social practices and the viewpoints were negative. Table 9.1 provides a summary of the analysis of the ten “neighbouring social practices”.

As this table indicates, the majority of the “neighbouring social practices” support the theoretical proposition of the thesis since they lead to intended urban social group segregation. Starting with the use of public space with restricted access, the analysis denoted that most of the interviewed outside residents had never been inside the

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<sup>138</sup> Another practice (social relations and socialisation) led both to segregation and non-segregation.

gated community. Although they lived in spatial proximity, the security devices deterred them from entering the settlement. There was no social interaction and “insiders” were satisfied with having a restricted access. “Outsiders” also recognised that access had to be restricted as it was an attribute of gated communities and probably its most valuable feature. In addition, “insiders” had negative viewpoints towards the outside residents since they mainly considered them “poor and dangerous”. “Outsiders” were usually seen by “insiders” as a homogeneous social group, without taking into account the existing different socio-economic levels. Therefore, this practice resulted in intended urban social group segregation supporting the theoretical proposition of the thesis.

**Table 9.1: Neighbouring social practices and urban social group segregation: outcomes**

Neighbouring social practices	Outcomes	Support /contradict thesis’ theoretical proposition
1. Use of public space with restricted access	Intended segregation	Support
2. Institutional communication between inside and outside communities	Intended segregation	Support
3. Charity work benefiting the outside poor communities	Unintended segregation	Contradict
4. Job provision for outside communities	Intended segregation	Support
5. A- Social relations and venues for socialisation – use of the gated community	Intended segregation	Support
B- Social relations and venues for socialisation – use of the surrounding local communities	Unintended non-segregation	Contradict
6. Shopping	Unintended non-segregation	Contradict
7. Schooling	Intended segregation	Support
8. Religious practices	Intended non-segregation	Contradict
9. Sports	Intended segregation	Support
10. Use of public transport	Intended segregation	Support

The lack of institutional communications between neighbourhoods to solve problems reinforced the separation established by the “insiders” who needed a third party to deal with them and were not interested in interacting with the residents’ associations of the local surrounding communities. There was mutual indifference between

“insiders” and “outsiders” and no knowledge about the other group. The lack of social interactions between both groups indicated intended urban social group segregation and consequently this practice supports the theoretical proposition of the thesis.

Palmares’ residents did not hire outside residents to work in the gated community. The main reason for this was that security and maintenance staff were not employed by the gated community itself, but outsourced. Therefore, these workers were other companies’ employees who lived elsewhere in Mendoza. In relation to home-helps, who were hired by “insiders”, particularly by women, these workers had usually been employed by the individual families before moving to the gated community and consequently it was not particularly important where they lived. In addition to this, “outsiders” considered they were not employed to work in Palmares because “insiders” did not have a good opinion of them. Thus, this practice resulted in intended urban social group segregation and can be considered as supporting the theoretical proposition of the thesis.

The analysis of schooling evidenced the increasing privatisation process carried out by some social groups since all children living in Palmares attended private schools. In contrast, most children from the surrounding communities attended local state schools. Consequently there were no opportunities for social interactions evidencing intended urban social group segregation and supporting the theoretical proposition of the thesis.

In the case of sport practices, most Palmares’ residents used the facilities available in the gated community or sport amenities from other city areas. A very small group used sport facilities located in the surrounding local communities. So sports also contributed to urban social group segregation, which also supported the theoretical proposition of the thesis.

As far the last practice, the majority of people living in Palmares did not use public transport, considered as a social practice that could prompt social interactions between different social groups. The lack of social interactions led to intended urban social group segregation and to support the theoretical proposition of the thesis.

All these practices led to intended urban social group segregation, which is explained by the general and particular viewpoints, as already mentioned, and also by the gated community's attributes, such as restricted access, inside provision of social and sport amenities and the existence of a code of conduct.

But not all analysed social practices led to intended urban social group segregation. There were three exceptions: charity work, shopping and religious practices. These three practices all had different outcomes. Charity work also encouraged segregation though this was unintended because there were no social interactions between "insiders" and "outsiders" since a third party intervened. The practice of shopping contributed to non-segregation although this was not pursued by "insiders" (unintended), who used the same shopping facilities located in the local communities as "outsiders". They did not try to get closer to "outsiders" and went shopping there mainly for convenience. Finally, the religious practices led to intended non-segregation since they encouraged social interactions between both social groups who participated in the activities organised by the local church. These social interactions were pursued and although "insiders" had general negative viewpoints about "outsiders", in the case of this practice, particular positive viewpoints were more relevant. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that religious practices were not performed by all residents living inside and outside the gated community and, consequently, they were more limited in their contribution to social interactions between both groups. The outcomes of these three practices contradict the theoretical proposition of the thesis.

The practice of social relations and venues for socialisation requires a special comment because it provided two different results according to the venues for socialisation. In the case of the use of the gated community for socialisation, it produced intended urban social group segregation because "insiders" socialised there with other "insiders" or people living in other areas, but not "outsiders". In contrast, the use of the shopping centre located in the surrounding local communities contributed to unintended non-segregation because both "insiders" and "outsiders" used it for socialisation. Nevertheless, social interactions were not encouraged since social actors were not interested in socialising with members of the other group.



Based on the findings of all these practices, **the theoretical proposition of the thesis is partially confirmed**. Considering the main questions guiding this thesis, it can be said that **there is a relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation**, which is explained by the gated community's attributes and the viewpoints of its residents. The latter separated themselves from the surrounding local communities. This process is intended since there were negative viewpoints justifying the practices and also negative viewpoints about the other social group. This implies that the segregation process was either pursued or at least known and accepted by the gated community's residents. However, there were some practices that did not contribute to this process of urban social group segregation.

The research project elaborated in Chapter 4 did not establish a hierarchy of the "neighbouring social practices" and therefore the research was conducted giving the same importance to all practices. The data collected showed, on the contrary, that "insiders" wanted to discuss some practices more, such as the use of public space or socialisation than others like schooling or use of the public transport. This does not mean that some practices are more important than others, but that residents related some practices more than others to living in a gated community. Thus, to them schooling would probably not be conducted in a different form if they would live in an open neighbourhood, while the use of public space would be done differently. Also, as explained in previous chapters, for analytical purposes general and particular viewpoints are treated in a simplified form allowing mainly for dichotomic situations. However, it is acknowledged that reality is richer.

The relevance of studying segregation through the social practices of a group living in a gated community is that this group indicates, through its social practices, that it does not want to interact with the outside local communities. This social group is not interested in creating social bonds with the groups that have been living in that territory long before it arrived. This is related to the gated community's nature: its residents have voluntarily decided to move there and protect themselves from unwanted people through visible security devices. The lack of social interactions with the outside residents fits into the whole concept of gated community, encouraging isolation and privatisation. The very same act of moving to a gated community implies the idea of segregation. Nevertheless, it is important not to take

for granted this isolation, but to find evidence of it, apart from the physical attributes of gated communities. The distinction between intended and unintended segregation helps to understand that although segregation is embedded in the nature of gated communities, their residents might not always be aware of it, nor want it. It also denotes that some “neighbouring social practices” prompt social interactions (either intended or unintended) that are a result of structural and individual elements.

Therefore, it is possible to say that **by living in gated communities their residents favour intended urban social group segregation**. The relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation can be analysed by looking at the social practices and viewpoints held by their residents. This also justifies the micro-scale analysis of segregation that allows deep examination of how a social group acts. It would be interesting to be able to apply the theoretical and methodological frameworks developed in this thesis to other gated communities in other cities and make comparable analyses. If more researches find a similar relationship, this would imply that urban social group segregation is a feature of gated communities and it would have to be included in the concept of gated communities as one of its distinctive attributes.

The use of social practices and viewpoints as the instruments to explain the relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation is one of the contributions of the thesis. By using these concepts the thesis sought to contribute to the theoretical discussion on this relationship. The great diversity of topics examined in relation to the development of gated communities makes it impossible to develop one single theoretical approach to study gated communities. Nevertheless, as this thesis has shown, it is possible to develop theoretical approaches for the analysis of a particular topic and its relation to gated communities. This thesis has suggested one theoretical and methodological approach for the analysis of segregation in relation to the development of gated communities. This approach can be considered a simplistic or mechanical approach as the diversity of possibilities that "neighbouring social practices" and viewpoints can take are mainly considered in a structured and simplified form. However, the thesis argues that this is necessary to provide some kind of analytical framework that might allow for comparisons between different case studies.

Furthermore, the thesis emphasised the need to elaborate a universal definition of gated communities that would facilitate comparisons worldwide and provide a definition for this concept. It also explained the importance of distinguishing urban social group segregation from urban social segregation and elaborated a definition for the former. The understanding of urban social group segregation not only as an intended consequence of social actors' practices, but also as an unintended consequence is another contribution of this thesis.

The thesis also contributed to the urban sociology and urban planning fields in the countries of the south. Moreover, it provided a new case study, giving new information about gated communities in an intermediate Argentinian city and contributing to the scholarly knowledge on the subject. Finally, by looking at gated communities, the thesis contributed to incorporating new topics into the urban and social development agendas.

Considering the findings of this research, it is possible to start thinking of questions for further research on this topic, such as:

- Is urban social group segregation by gated communities' residents always a result of living in this type of residential settlement? What happens in other cities?
- Are there particular conditions that might contribute to social interaction between "insiders" and "outsiders"?
- How can the local government counteract this process of urban social group segregation?
- What is the relationship between gated communities' residents and the city as a whole? Does it change as a consequence of living in these closed settlements?
- Considering the findings of this research, will these be different in 20 years' time when there would be a generation of residents brought up in a gated community who have lived inside all the time? Will they still be living in a gated community?

Gated communities do not create social differences in the city according to the viewpoints analysed in this thesis. But they highlight these differences. Social actors believe that if there are no structural changes in our societies, social differences will increase and therefore gated communities will continue to expand in the urban

landscape. The question then is, what would it happen if gated communities scale up, along with their social consequences? The examination of these consequences, such as urban social group segregation, has to serve as a point of reflexion on contemporary societies and the future of cities as places for social interactions, freedom, diversity, respect and consideration for other citizens, deemed all as equal human beings with equal access to benefits and services. Would it be possible to recover this image? Or would we have to agree with Giandomenico Amendola (2000: 344-346)?:

“Residents of the suburbs and edge cities are so used to the conditions of social homogeneity inside their own fortified city compounds that they do not know anymore how to live with what is different... High-tech security devices are used to achieve the dream of the perfect community, and above all, of an increasing private community... that manages to keep ‘the other’, and with this also the idea of the city, far away”.



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## **APPENDICES SECTION**

## APPENDIX A: URBAN AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN MENDOZA AND GODOY CRUZ MUNICIPALITY OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES

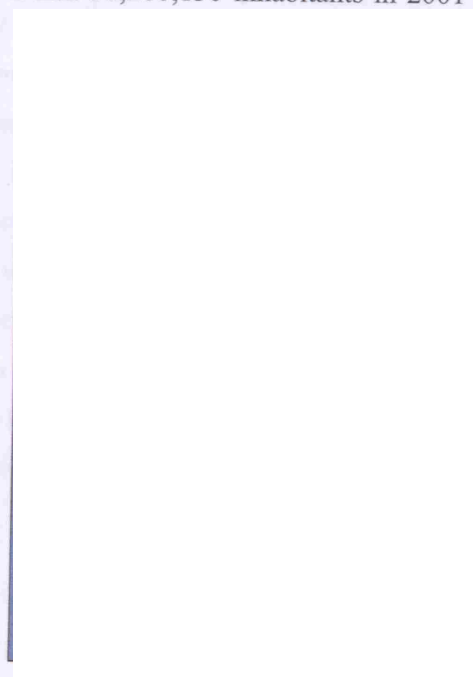
### Introduction

This appendix reviews the provincial and local contexts of the case study. It draws on primary information collected for this research and secondary data from censuses and reports. It is organised in two sections: Section A.1 gives an overview of the population and location of Argentina to complement the economic and social changes explained in Chapter 2. Section A.2 focuses on the provincial level and considers changes in Metropolitan Area of Mendoza (MAM), analysing the transformations in its social and urban structures during the last two decades. It examines the development of gated communities in MAM and reviews their typology, legislation and planning. Social indicators of the Municipality of Godoy Cruz, where Palmares is located are also included in this section.

### A.1. Argentina over the last decades

The Republic of Argentina is one of the largest countries in Latin America on the basis of its geographical size and population. It had 36,260,130 inhabitants in 2001 according to the last census, living on 3,761,274 square kilometres (INDEC website). It is located in the southern part of South America, bordering Chile on the west, Paraguay and Bolivia on the north and Brazil and Uruguay on the east (Figure A.1).

Similar to what happened to other countries' economies in the region since the 1970s, but especially during the 1990s, the Argentinian economy has been dominated by neo-liberal and structural



*Figure A.1: Argentina within South America*



adjustment policies including monetary stabilisation, decentralisation, privatisations and public-private partnerships, as well as market liberalisation, encouraged by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Many authors who have studied this period, like Beccaria (1993), Feijoó (2001), Garretón *et al.* (2003), and Tenti Fanfani (1993), emphasise that these policies have had more negative than positive results in the short term: corruption, state inefficiency, bankrupted national and provincial economies and high risk markets. They lacked societal consensus, contributing to the development of different forms of socio-political protest and had enormous negative effects on poverty, equality and social integration. As mentioned in Chapter 2, socio-economic changes have modified the urban landscape during the last decades with the arrival of international and national private investments in recreational and commercial infrastructure, in addition to residential settlements for upper-class families. The private sector has acquired more influence on shaping the city with a weaker state that enables private actions without clear guidelines for urban planning. In addition, the state does not have the necessary human, financial and technological resources to cope with accelerated changes imposed by the logic of the market.

In this context, the development of gated communities in Argentinian cities represents new investments and competence for the best services and locations in the city, creating strong disparities amongst different urban areas. Although gated communities are not a new phenomenon, they have acquired more relevance in the urban landscape since the 1990s, becoming a more common housing option for high-income families that privilege urban security, social homogeneity and status, as well as avoidance of city problems. The periphery has been transformed into the living place of both lower-income families, who were the original dwellers living in social housing estates and informal settlements, and upper-income families living in gated communities. Their development has not been accompanied by a suitable legal framework at the national level, as explained in Chapter 2. This creates disparities on how provincial and local governments deal with their expansion. The next section reviews the development of gated communities in Mendoza and how provincial and local governments deal with their expansion.

## A.2. Metropolitan Area of Mendoza: an overview

Neo-liberal policies implemented in Argentina were also adopted in the Province of Mendoza. This section focuses on the changes that occurred over the last two decades in the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza (MAM), the largest city of the Province. It is divided into four sub-sections. Sub-section A.2.1 looks at key features of MAM and changes in its social structure. Sub-section A.2.2 examines urban transformations in MAM. Sub-section A.2.3 focuses on the development of gated communities, their location, typology, policies and legislation. Finally, Sub-section A.2.4 explores social and urban indicators of Godoy Cruz, the municipality where Palmares is situated.

### A.2.1. Changes in the social structure



The Province of Mendoza is situated in the west-centre of Argentina (Figure A.2), bordering Chile. Its surface is 150,839 square kilometres. On the basis of its population, it is the fourth largest province in the country, with 1,579,651 inhabitants in 2001, according to the last national census (DEIE). It is constituted by 18 municipalities. Six of these form the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza (MAM), also called “Gran Mendoza”. These are: Capital, Guaymallén, Godoy Cruz, Las Heras, Luján de Cuyo and Maipú (Figure A.3).

*Figure A.2: Mendoza within Argentina*

MAM has the largest population of the province with 986,341 inhabitants in 2001 (INDEC), representing 62 percent of the provincial population. Owing to its population's size, MAM is considered an intermediate city. In Argentina, intermediate cities are those with a population between 50,000 and 1,000,000 inhabitants (Gudiño & D’Inca, 2004). There are only four cities with a population between 500,000 and 1,000,000 inhabitants and 22 with a population between 100,000 and 500,000 inhabitants (INDEC).

Figure A.3: Municipalities of MAM

As in the rest of the country, Mendoza has also been affected by economic restructuring and the implementation of structural adjustment policies. This has had an impact on its social structure. Unemployment, poverty and crime have notably increased over the last two decades. Although the rate of unemployment has increased, it has always been considerably lower than figures for the whole country. In 1989, 4.4 percent of the active population of MAM

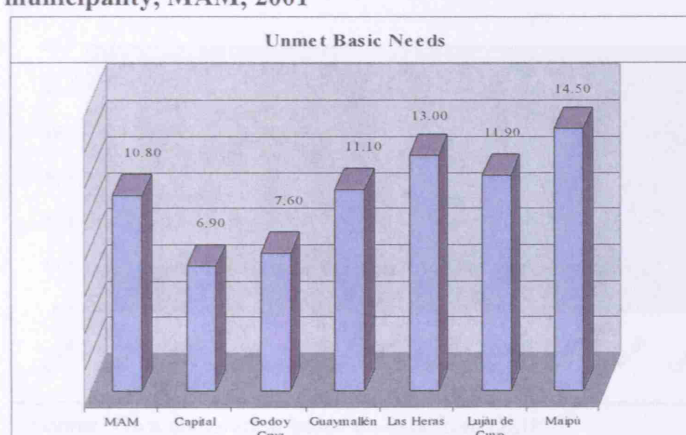
were jobless, whilst in the country this figure was nearly double at 8.1 percent. Later, during the 1990s, whilst the highest figure for Argentina was 18.4 percent in May 1995, the peak figure of unemployment in MAM was 7.9 percent in May 1997. It reached the highest rate of 13.5 percent in October 2001, getting closer to the national figure (16.4 percent). Unemployment in MAM decreased to 9.3 percent in May 2003 and to 4.2 percent in the first term of 2007, with figures lower than for the whole country, where the rate was 15.6 percent in May 2003 and 9.8 percent in the first term of 2007 (DEIE and INDEC).

MAM has followed a similar trend than the country regarding poverty indicators. Over the last years, short term poverty by income has increased, while long term poverty according to unmet basic needs has decreased. The latter has descended from 16.9 percent in 1980, to 10.8 percent households in 2001 (DEIE). MAM has always had better figures than the whole province, where there were 20.4 percent in 1980 and 13.1 percent households with unmet basic needs in 2001. The municipalities of Capital and Goody Cruz have better infrastructure than the rest of MAM, which is reflected in the lower figures of households with unmet basic needs, as shown in Chart A.1.

Access to basic infrastructure in terms of sewage, drinking water, good quality housing as well as to basic education has improved over the last 25 years, as data on

unmet basic needs show. However, there are still more than 8,000 families living in informal settlements in MAM. As Table A.1 shows, the number of informal settlements has slightly increased in the whole of MAM. The situation seems to be worse in Guaymallén, Luján de Cuyo and Maipú, where the number of informal settlements have largely raised, probably due to the availability of empty land there, whilst Las Heras has notably improved. The situation for the whole province is more precarious now than 15 years ago, as this table shows.

**Chart A.1: Households (%) with unmet basic needs by municipality, MAM, 2001**



Source: Own elaboration based on data from DEIE

**Table A.1: Informal settlements in MAM, 1991 and 2004**

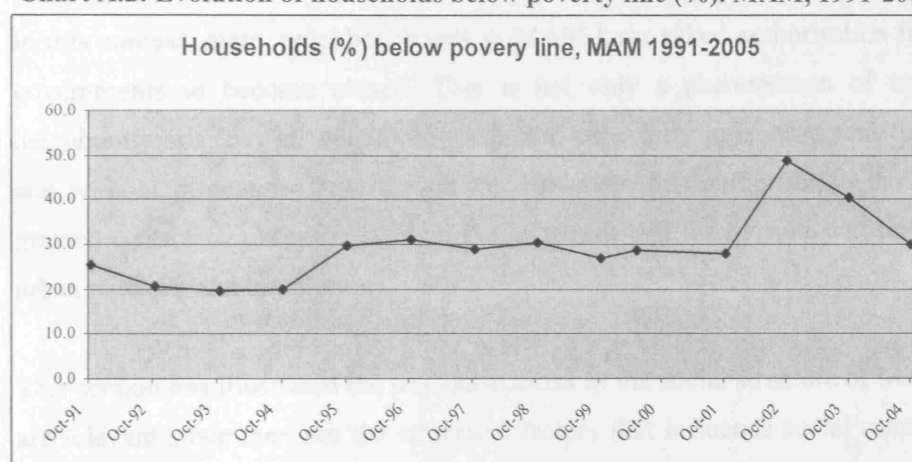
Municipalities	Number of informal settlements	
	1991	2004*
Capital	12	14
Godoy Cruz	21	23
Guaymallén	7	14
Las Heras	26	7
Luján de Cuyo	11	19
Maipú	6	9
Total MAM	83	86
Total Province	133	157

Source: Own elaboration based on DEIE (1992) and data provided by Direcciones de Vivienda Municipales and IPV / \* Provisional data

Poverty by income has increased in MAM. As a result of the 2001 crisis, the households below the poverty line raised from 27.6 percent in October 2001 to 48.8 percent in October 2002 (DEIE). During 2002 and 2003, MAM had higher figures of poverty than the average figures for urban areas in the whole country. Since 2003 households living below the poverty line in Mendoza have decreased: from 40.3

percent in 2003 to 30.0 percent in October 2004 and 26.1 percent in May 2005 (DEIE and INDEC, 2005). The impoverishment of large population groups has modified the Mendocinean social structure. The gap between the richest and poorest is getting bigger. Whilst in May 1990 the richest 10 percent of the population of MAM earned 14.9 times more than the poorest 10 percent, by 2004 this figure had increased to 30.2 (DEIE). Fluctuations of poverty line in MAM can be seen in Chart A.2.

**Chart A.2: Evolution of households below poverty line (%). MAM, 1991-2005**



Source: Own elaboration based on data from DEIE.

This unequal income distribution has made social differences more evident. Increasing crime rate, in addition to fear of crime, appears related to this social situation. Although Mendoza presents figures similar to or even lower than the figures for the whole country as regards to most social indicators, this is not the case of the crime rate. Over the last years, crimes have largely increased in Mendoza. Whilst there were 217.6 crimes for every 10,000 people in 1991, this figure went up to 570.3 cases for every 10,000 people (a figure only exceeded by Buenos Aires City) in 2000. The dominant form of crime has been against property (burglaries). In 2001, 71.5 percent of crimes were against property and 22.9 percent against people (DEIE).

In relation to fear of crime, whilst in March 1996 53.6 percent of the provincial population said they felt safe, later in June 1999 this figure dropped to 30.2 percent (Bistué *et al.*, 2001). Although all strata increased their perception of being unsafe in the period 1996-1999, as shown in Table A.2, it was the upper strata that experienced



the largest change, dropping from 72.9 percent to 37.0 percent of the population in this group feeling safe. These figures have worsened over the last years as data from the government illustrated<sup>139</sup>.

**Table A.2: Fear of crime according to socio-economic levels, Province of Mendoza, 1996 and 1999**

Fear of crime	Socio-economic levels (%)					
	Upper	Upper	Middle	Middle	Lower	Lower
	1996	1999	1996	1999	1996	1999
Very safe	72.9	37.0	48.9	40.1	36.4	22.8
Not safe	27.1	63.0	51.1	59.9	63.6	77.2

Source: Adapted from Bistué *et al.* (2001)

In this context, many neighbourhoods in MAM have asked authorisation from local governments to become closed. This is not only a phenomenon of upper-class neighbourhoods, but all neighbourhoods and especially poor ones that feel unsafe and without protection from the police. However, this authorisation has not been granted (with few exceptions), with the argument that the closure will interrupt the urban network and circulation.

This section has illustrated the transformations in the social structure of MAM. They are relevant since they are the structural factors that influence social actors in their decision to live in gated communities. The rate of unemployment has considerably increased over the last years resulting in an increase of citizens living below the poverty line. Conversely, there has been an improvement in the incomes of few social groups who have benefited from economic changes. In addition, MAM has suffered an impressive increase in crime rate. As a consequence, all kinds of security devices have been developed, with gated communities being one of the most radical strategies, as later explained in Sub-section A.2.3. Before discussing this, it is worth noting the urban transformations in MAM over the last years.

### **A.2.2. Urban transformations in Metropolitan Area of Mendoza**

From the early 1990s, the city acquired more importance in the context of Mercosur<sup>140</sup>, becoming a link between the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans. Big

<sup>139</sup> However, these research reports are not available to the public, with only few data published in the media.

<sup>140</sup> Mercosur (*Mercado Común del Sur*) is a Regional Trade Agreement signed in 1991 by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

investments in roads and motorways produced major changes contributing to the development of road transport and thus to commercial activities. Urban expansion occurred mostly over agricultural lands, and especially over vineyards<sup>141</sup>. This section reviews the transformations of MAM as a consequence of economic restructuring. It considers changes in commercial and residential activities as well as road infrastructure.

The process of suburbanisation that started during the 1970s has had two different stages. The first period 1970s-1980s, was mainly encouraged by the state building social housing estates with deficient services and infrastructure in the periphery due to lower land prices. The second stage started in the early 1990s when traditional central residential neighbourhoods became less attractive to middle-and upper-class families who then decided to move to the periphery. The economic stability of those years provided households access to real estate credits. The private sector, along with families, became central actors of suburbanisation. According to Nelly Gray de Cerdán, “the process of urban social segregation definitely consolidated since many Mendocinean families turned their suburban secondary houses into primary residences, though they keep their flats in the city centre as a status symbol” (Gray de Cerdán, 2005: 54). Nevertheless, social segregation is not a recent phenomenon in Mendoza. Ricardo Ponte (1999) explains that after the 1861 earthquake that destroyed half of Mendoza, the city was socially divided: the new city occupied by the wealthy families was on the west, whilst the destroyed city occupied by the poor was on the east side of *San Martín Street* (still the main street of MAM). This division is still very noticeable and properties on the western side of the city centre are more valuable.

Over the last two decades MAM has experienced changes in its urban landscape because of the arrival of national and international private investments in shopping centres, supermarkets, top quality hotels and wineries in addition to housing. This is related to the opening of the economy as well as the strategic position of the city in the context of Mercosur. Several hypermarkets from international companies installed their shops in both central and peripheral areas, close to motorways to

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<sup>141</sup> Viticulture is one of the most important economic activities in Mendoza, along with mining and oil production. Mendoza produces 80% of the Argentinian wine (ProMendoza).

facilitate access. This produced a drop in the inner city's commercial activity and the deterioration of the area. The localisation of commercial buildings in the periphery brought new services to that area, such as bank branches, medical centres, private schools and office spaces.

In relation to road infrastructure, the construction of "Corredor del Oeste", a motorway that goes from north to south in the western periphery, has been the most important change over the last few years. The use of private vehicles has increased. In 1986 30.7 percent of the population used their vehicles, whilst in 1998 42.1 percent of the population of MAM travelled by car. The use of public transport decreased in the same period from 53 percent to 36 percent, becoming another factor contributing to the worsening of segregation in MAM and increasing the gap between those who can access to private transport and those who cannot (Montaña & Palero, 2003).

In addition to changes in road infrastructure and services in the periphery, the construction of gated communities over the last years is one of the most significant transformations of the urban landscape. Gated communities mainly locate in peripheral areas where land is available, competing with housing schemes for lower-income families (Gray de Cerdán, 2005).

### **A.2.3. Gated communities in Metropolitan Area of Mendoza**

There were only two gated communities in MAM until late 1980s. Numbers started to rise by the beginning of the 2000 reaching some 70 gated communities in 2007 (See Figure A.4)<sup>142</sup>, as this research found (See Table A.3).

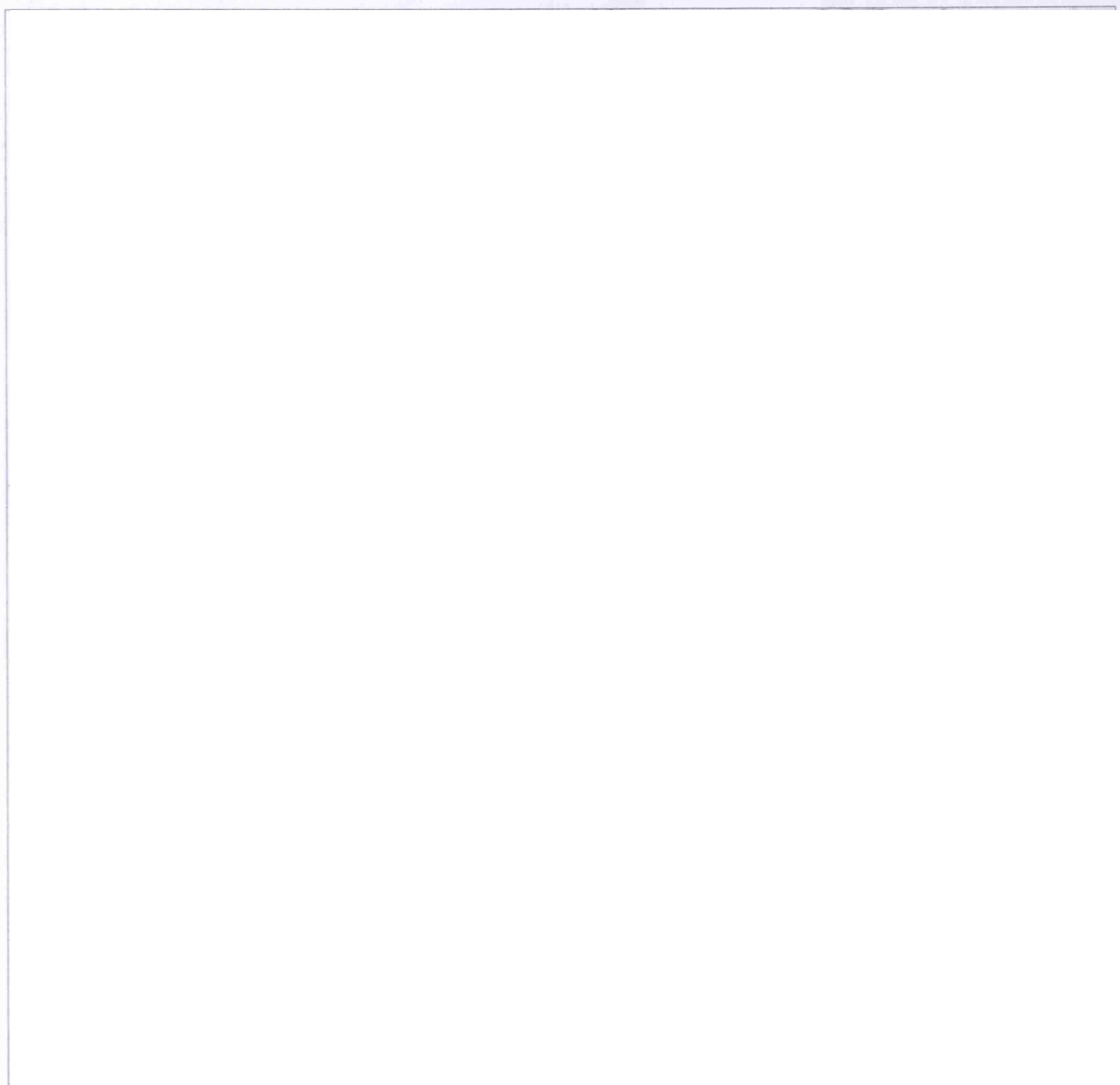
This expansion of gated communities produced the surge of services exclusively targeted at their residents. There are two specialised monthly magazines published in Mendoza, which are distributed for free in about 5,000 houses located in gated

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<sup>142</sup> Figure A.4 locates all gated communities in MAM according to what developers and the media defined as gated communities. However, not all these gated communities fit within the definition of gated communities given by the thesis in Chapter 3. Figure A.5 illustrates gated communities according to the thesis' definition.



**Figure A.4: Gated Communities in the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza I**  
(according to developers and the media)



## References

### Types of GC:

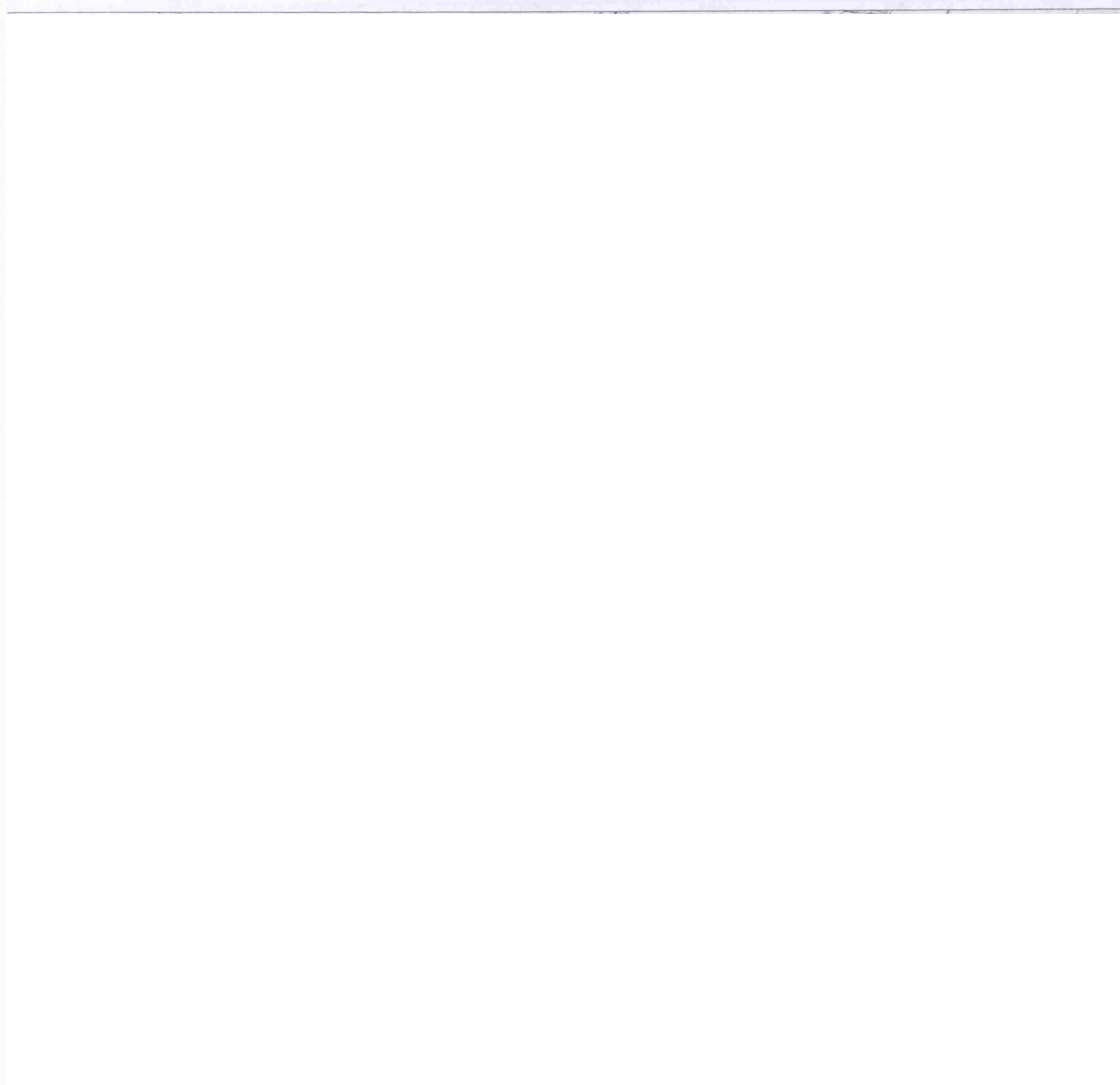
- Closed Neighbourhood (CN)
- Clubes de Campo (CC)
- Garden-Tower (GT)
- Farm Club (FC)
- Mega-project (M)

### Occupied GC/Not Occupied:

- Occupied Gated Community (GC)
- Gated Community (GC) under construction

Numbers refer to GC's names according to Table A.3. Map by S.R.

**Figure A.5: Gated Communities in the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza II**  
(according to gated communities' definition)



#### References

##### Types of GC:

- Closed Neighbourhood (CN)
- Clubes de Campo (CC)
- Garden-Tower (GT)
- Farm Club (FC)
- Mega-project (M)

##### Occupied GC/Not Occupied:

- Occupied Gated Community (GC)
- Gated Community (GC) under construction

Numbers refer to GC's names according to Table A.3. Map by S.R.

**Table A.3: Gated communities in MAM**

#	Name	Type	Municipality	Creation Year	Plots (quantity and size)	Occupied/ Not Occupied
1	Dalvian	CN	Capital/ Las Heras	1976	560	Yes
2	El Escorial	CN	Godoy Cruz	1993	37	Yes
3	Palmares	CN	Godoy Cruz	1994	900	Yes
4	Rincón de Arizu	CN	Godoy Cruz	2000	28	Yes
45	Villa Mediterránea	GT	Godoy Cruz	2000	no data	Yes
70	Palmares Valley	M	Godoy Cruz	2007	no data	No
68	Sol Trapiche	CN	Godoy Cruz	2004-05	23	Yes
5	Rincón del Cerro	CN	Godoy Cruz	no data	no data	No
14	Club de Campo Mendoza	CC	Guaymallén	1996	409	Yes
7	Unión Country Club	CC	Guaymallén	1999	10	No
9	El Trébol	CN	Guaymallén	1999	10	Yes
11	Senderos de Campo	CN	Guaymallén	1999	29	No
12	Solares de Rodeo del Medio	CN	Guaymallén	1999	no data	No
13	Vía de la Fontana	CN	Guaymallén	1999	18	No
17	Solares de Guariento	CN	Guaymallén	1999	no data	No
6	Jardines de Bermejo	CN	Guaymallén	2000	17 (1000 m2 each)	No
10	Aldea de Torreblanca	CN	Guaymallén	2000	116	No
15	Don Ernesto	CN	Guaymallén	2000	10	No
16	Puerto Bizantino	CN	Guaymallén	2000	no data	No
8	Las Chacras de Buena Nueva	FC	Guaymallén	2000	no data	No
46	Serrana Club	CN	Guaymallén	2004	no data	no data
18	Grupo 14	CN	Las Heras	1977	14	Yes
19	Ruca-Len	CN	Las Heras	1999	no data	Yes
60	Cerro de la Capilla	CN	Las Heras	2003	200	Yes
59	Patio del Sol	CN	Las Heras	no data	no data	no
61	Alto Challao	CN	Las Heras	no data	198	Yes
62	Cerros Azules	CN	Las Heras	no data	no data	Yes
63	Corredor del Oeste	CN	Las Heras	no data	no data	Yes
31	Vistalba Country Club	CN	Luján de Cuyo	1997	1000 to 1500m2	Yes
20	El Huerto	CN	Luján de Cuyo	1999	no data	No
23	Cerro Alto	CN	Luján de Cuyo	1999	48	No
24	El Recodo	CN	Luján de Cuyo	1999	22	No
26	Pueyrredón	CN	Luján de Cuyo	1999	183	No
28	Haras de Perdriel	CN	Luján de Cuyo	1999	22	No
30	Portal de Vistalba	CN	Luján de Cuyo	1999	from 1000m2	Yes
55	Liceo Country Club	CC	Luján de Cuyo	2000	30	Yes
21	Lomas de Terrada	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2000	180 (432m2 each)	Yes
22	Madrigales Carrodilla	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2000	22	No
25	El Remanso	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2000	103 (650 to 5000m2)	Yes
27	Las Carretas	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2000	no data	No
32	Ayres de Fader	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2000	56	No
43	Laderas	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2001	59 (500m2)	No
39	El Rincón de Chacras	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2003	70	Yes
44	Jardines de Santa Oliva	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2003	50	Yes
65	Viamonte	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2003-4	60	Yes
67	Valle Escondido	CN	Luján de Cuyo	2005-6	43	No
29	La Capilla	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	no data	Yes
33	Chacras de Farrel	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	55 (800 to 1000m2)	Yes
34	La Puntilla	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	no data	no data
35	Puerta de la Abadía	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	no data	no data
41	Las Candelas	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	800m2	Yes
49	Balcones de la Carrodilla	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	70	Yes
56	Portal de Boedo	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	44 (750 to 1200m2)	No
57	Terruños de Araoz	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	41	No
64	Portal de la Carrodilla	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	no data	no data
66	Salas del Plata	CN	Luján de Cuyo	no data	no data	Yes
36	Furlotti	CN	Maipú	1996	300	Yes
37	Rincón de los Sauces	CN	Maipú	1999	44	No
50	Solares de Palma	CN	Maipú	1999	no data	Yes
47	Paraíso I	CN	Maipú	2004	no data	No
54	El Marquesado	CN	Maipú	2006	no data	No
69	El Torreón	M	Maipú	2007	1200	No
38	Club de Campo Maipú	CC	Maipú	no data	no data	no data
51	Pinar del Sol	CN	Maipú	no data	no data	Yes
52	Camino del Sol	CN	Maipú	no data	no data	no data
53	Vista Verde	CN	Maipú	no data	no data	Yes
58	Montes de Santa Maria	CN	Maipú	no data	17 (from 1000m2)	Yes
40	La Vacherie	CC	Maipú/ Luján	1999	454	Yes
48	Rancho de la Merced	CC	Maipú/ Luján	2004	no data	No
42	Puesta del Sol	CN	no data	no data	no data	no data

Data collected by S.R.

communities<sup>143</sup>. There is also an annual commercial exhibition called “*Expo Mendoza Country*”<sup>144</sup> that consists of stands promoting gated communities, as well as architectural offices and services and amenities for houses.

There are no data about population living in the local gated communities. Most of these residential schemes are on a small scale and have not yet been completely inhabited, as shown in Table A.3. There are three, however, which are considered of significant size since the population exceeds 200 families in each of them. Palmares is one of them. The typology elaborated for Argentina in Chapter 2 can be applied to gated communities in Mendoza. This section reviews the six proposed types for the case of Mendoza, where the expansion of gated communities occurred later than in Buenos Aires.

Closed neighbourhoods (“*barrios cerrados*”) are the most common type in MAM. They are located in the periphery, with a few exceptions located in peri-central areas. They have large green areas and clubhouses for community activities. Not all of them have sport amenities. They all have physical limits, a barrier to enter and security. However, the type and sophistication of security devices vary amongst them. In some cases there is more emphasis on symbolic elements than on effective security. The oldest closed neighbourhood, called “Dalvian”, was built in 1976. It has had several expansions due to its success, especially during the 1990s when insecurity appeared as a sensitive issue in Mendocinean society. It has single detached and semi-detached houses with about 560 families currently living there. It has 24-hour private security, tennis and “paddle”<sup>145</sup> courts as well as a football pitch.

During 2007, two mega-projects in MAM were approved and started been constructed. One is called “El Torreón” and consists of five gated communities. The second one is called “Palmares Valley” and is been built on a 200-hectare piece of land opposite to Palmares, by the same developer who built the latter. It will have 14 gated communities with 180 houses in each on average, golf courts and other sports

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<sup>143</sup> “*Revista Club House*” is a 60-page magazine published since May 2004 (further information available at [www.revistaclubhouse.com.ar](http://www.revistaclubhouse.com.ar)). “*Concepto Country*” is a 80-page magazine published since January 2005.

<sup>144</sup> “*Expo Mendoza Country*” 8<sup>th</sup> Edition took place in 2007. Further information available at [www.expocountrymendoza.com.ar](http://www.expocountrymendoza.com.ar)

<sup>145</sup> See footnote 134, Chapter 8.

facilities aimed at different social groups. There are no “*marinas*” yet in Mendoza. They might be built in the future close to some of the artificial lakes where nautical sports are practised.

There are also a few cases of “*clubes de campo*” in MAM. The best known is “Club de Campo Mendoza” created in 1971. It is a club with polo courts, golf courses, swimming pool and a clubhouse. Later in mid-1990s a few plots were sold to its members, building the gated community in 1996. It is a very prestigious gated community within Mendocinean elite with expensive membership and maintenance fees.

There is only one “garden-tower” in MAM called “Villa Mediterránea”. It is located in the Municipality of Godoy Cruz, bordering Capital. It was built by the same developing company as Palmares. It has a brick wall surrounding the perimeter, with security services, amenities and green areas. Finally, there are a few cases of “*chacras*”, most of them still under development. They are located in peripheral areas and have large plots of about 1,200 square metres for large green areas in addition to the residence.

This review shows the diversity of gated communities in Mendoza. The existence of several projects currently under development would indicate that the forting-up process would continue. Despite their expansion over the last years, gated communities in Mendoza have not received attention as regards urban planning and legislation, as explained in the next sub-section.

#### *A.2.3.1. Policies and legislation on gated communities in Mendoza*

Urban planning, land use regulation and control as well as environmental protection are functions carried out at the municipal level in the Province of Mendoza. There have been several drafts for a land uses law, but none has been approved yet, mostly as a consequence of political and economic interests. Currently each municipality has its own regulation on land uses.

Urban planning at local or provincial levels has not paid particular attention to the development of gated communities over the last 20 years in MAM. As expressed by

an architect working in DOADU (Direction of Environmental Planning and Urban Development) from the provincial government, *“we are not working on this topic because we have more urgent issues to discuss”* (Anastasia). Since there is no provincial law on gated communities some municipalities have approved ordinances to legislate over their territories on this matter, which means a disparity of criteria on how projects are carried out in the city. At the provincial level, there are only few guidelines related to the development of gated communities<sup>146</sup>.

Gated communities created in Mendoza have to be designed according to Land Subdivision Law 4.341 of 1979, which regulates the construction of new housing settlements. It establishes how plots are divided regarding minimum sizes and spaces that have to be donated to the municipality for public streets and social infrastructure. Once the project is approved by the Direction of the Cadastre (Provincial Government), the project has to be ratified by the municipality where the project would locate. Many gated communities in MAM were created under the figure of this law, as “open neighbourhoods”. Later a special permission for the closure of the settlement and the restrictive use of the infrastructure within the limits of the scheme was granted by the municipality. Therefore, in some municipalities, case-by-case by-laws exist. This is the case for Palmares, as explained in Chapter 5. The second possibility is that gated communities are created according to Law 13.512, explained in Sub-section A.1.2.2, that establishes the creation of a condominium where owners hold their property and a percentage of common spaces, which cannot be subdivided. Streets are part of common spaces and considered private areas. This is the case of “El Escorial”, a “closed neighbourhood” in Godoy Cruz, as explained in Chapter 5. As there is no provincial law on gated communities in Mendoza, they are regulated through the provincial law for all types of residential settlements and also by case-by-case municipal by-laws. The situation is different in the municipality of Luján de Cuyo, where there is one by-law that legislates for all gated communities (Ordinance 1522/99, Honorable Concejo Deliberante Luján de Cuyo; 1999).

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<sup>146</sup> There is a two-page unpublished document from October 2000 which considers the administrative, legal, social and visual issues, as well as issues related to the urban road network, social infrastructure, and features of the gated communities in MAM (DOADU, 2000).

Staff working on urban planning in Mendoza agree on the need to have a provincial law regulating gated communities. There are two drafts of this and none has yet been approved. The first one (Bruni, 1999) presented to the Provincial Chamber of Deputies in 1999, regulates on minimum plot sizes, construction's regulations, necessary documentation for the scheme to be approved, rights and duties of the residents' association and of the developer. The closure of the residential compound would be allowed and public entrance could be controlled if that does not affect circulation network. The closure would mean that streets and other common spaces are no longer public. This law does not consider any form of compensation for the privatisation of public space that the settlement appropriates not allowing access to all citizens. It establishes that municipalities are the authorities to enforce this law.

The second draft (Pérez Botti & Serralta, 2003) was presented to the Chamber of Deputies in March 2003. It does not consider the existence of several types of gated communities and generalise all types as "closed neighbourhoods". This type is defined as an "urban scheme aimed at family residential use, with closed perimeter and all basic service infrastructure that guarantees permanent residential use" (Ibid.: 2). It establishes that the project should first be approved by the municipality and later by the provincial government. Environmental Impact Assessments should be done prior to the project's approval. Plots' subdivision could be done according to Law 13.512 (described earlier). There was a public assembly in July 2003 to discuss this draft amongst civil society and governmental organisations, but the draft was not approved.

This review shows the weakness of legislation and planning on gated communities in MAM without a law to regulate uniformly. The legal void points out that gated communities are not a priority for provincial or local governments and their development is mainly taking place according to the logic of the market. This has happened in the Municipality of Godoy Cruz. The next sub-section gives an overall description of the municipality where Palmares is located.

#### **A.2.4. Municipality of Godoy Cruz: social indicators**

Godoy Cruz is one of the six municipalities that make up the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza. It had 182,997 inhabitants in 2001, representing 11.6 percent of the total

provincial population and 18.6 percent of the MAM total population (DEIE). All its citizens live in urban areas. It occupies 75 square kilometres, being the smallest municipality after Capital. Along with Capital and Guaymallén, it provides services for all MAM.

This municipality had predominantly a residential function. However, it has lately increased its commercial function as a consequence of the recent location of several hypermarkets in its territory. New neighbourhoods have also been built, especially on the western side in the *piedemonte* area. Although this area has potential natural risks, such as small landslides and a lack of infrastructure, especially water supply and sanitation, it is the area that has received all the new housing projects as it is the only land available in the whole municipality. The residential function of that area is commanded by three actors: the state, for the building of social housing estates; private developers, for the provision of houses for middle- and upper-class families and CBOs that have helped citizens to settle there in informal settlements (Roitman, 1998).

Godoy Cruz presents a good condition in terms of basic infrastructure: 7.6 percent of its households had unmet basic needs in 2001, whilst the average for MAM was 10.8 percent, as previously shown in Chart A.1 in Sub-section A.2.1. However, 5.4 percent of the total population suffered household overcrowding and 2.9 percent of households lived in a house that did not satisfy socially acceptable standards. 88.5 percent of the houses had water supply and sanitation (INDEC). Godoy Cruz had 2,760 households living in 23 informal settlements in 2004<sup>147</sup>. In addition, unemployment highly increased in this municipality: from 6.5 percent jobless population in 1991 to 29.9 percent in 2001 (DEIE, 2004). At the other extreme, there are seven gated communities in Godoy Cruz, which evidences social inequalities.

This sub-section shows that Godoy Cruz has a better social situation than most other municipalities in MAM. However, there are still social problems like poverty and unemployment, as well as social polarisation manifested in some citizens living in informal settlements and others in gated communities.

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<sup>147</sup> Data provided by Instituto Provincial de la Vivienda, Mendoza Government, in 2004.



### **A.3. Conclusions**

The aim of this appendix was to present the context where the fieldwork of this research took place. It has focused mainly on the changes occurred in the Metropolitan Area of Mendoza. Social disparities have increased, especially in the beginning of the 2000s when the number of citizens below the poverty line expanded. Crime and fear of crime rates have also risen during recent years. Along with these transformations, MAM has experienced changes in the urban landscape. There have been investments in road, commercial, leisure and housing infrastructure. The city has expanded towards the periphery, where old residents who lived in social housing estates now share the space with upper-middle classes living in gated communities. This has changed the landscape of the periphery.

Gated communities have spread in MAM. The typology of gated communities suggested by Argentina can also be applied to Mendoza, where the “closed neighbourhood” is the most common type. The expansion of gated communities in MAM has not been accompanied by clear urban planning guidelines and legislation on this topic. Local governments are the authorities to regulate on these issues, resulting in each municipality having its own policy on the topic, creating a non-uniform treatment for gated communities’ projects. There is a complex situation where the private sector has a powerful role deciding on the city development.

Godoy Cruz is the municipality where Palmares is located. Although this municipality has a better condition than most other municipalities in MAM, it shows analogous social trends than other municipalities. There are increasing social inequalities, with a rise in informal settlements, in addition to the multiplication of gated communities. Both are located in peri-central and peripheral areas where new recreational and commercial infrastructure has created more disparities between privileged and non-privileged areas.

## **APPENDIX B:**

### **FIELDWORK NOTES**

#### **Introduction**

The research conducted for this thesis followed a qualitative methodology with a case study strategy. It aimed at examining the relationship between living in gated communities and urban social group segregation. Ninety five people were interviewed, as explained in Chapter 4. The semi-structured interview was the main research method used. Three main groups of social actors were interviewed: gated community's residents, members of the outside communities and "other sources". The latter group included relevant actors that provided complementary information, such as security guards, developers and government staff. This was the most appropriate method for data collection to get comprehensive answers on relationships amongst residents, relationships with members of the outside communities as well as about the changes and patterns in social practices and viewpoints. Direct observation appeared during the development of the fieldwork as another research method used. In addition, the analysis of documents such as briefings and documents from the residents' associations, maps, government documents and legislation was carried out on a continuous basis throughout the field research.

This appendix gives further explanations from those in Chapter 4 on how the research project was implemented during the fieldwork. It is divided into three main sections that consider the composition of the interviewees and their organisation into different groups of social actors involved in the research; the contents of the interview schedules and their implementation; and finally, how data was recorded and use made of direct observation.

#### **B.1. Interviewees**

There was no statistical information of Palmares' residents available as the census does not discriminate between information at the neighbourhood level. It was not known if Palmares homeowners' association had some statistical information. Request for this information was denied arguing that it was confidential. It was not possible to get statistical information about the population of the outside

neighbourhoods either. As explained in Chapter 4, interviewees were divided into three main groups: Palmares' residents; residents from the four outside neighbourhoods; and "other sources". Table B.1 shows the distribution of interviewees according to the different sub-groups.

**Table B.1: Interviewees according to groups and subgroups**

Groups	Subgroups	Interviewees			
1- Residents of Palmares		46 common residents		4 members of the homeowners' association board	
		Total: 50 people			
2- Neighbours from the surrounding areas		4 residents from "Altos de la Puntilla"	7 residents from "Fuchs"	3 residents from "Obras Sanitarias"	5 residents from "Urundel"
		Total: 19 people			
3- "Other sources"	1- Gated community staff	1 manager	1 head of security service	3 security guards	
		Total: 5 people			
	2- Developers	1 owner of the company that run the Palmares' project			
		2 partners of Palmares' project			
	Total: 3 people				
	3- Staff from local and provincial governments	1 mayor of Godoy Cruz			
		1 director of Urban Planning (local government)			
1 architect from the Direction of Urban Planning (local gov.)					
3 councillors of the local government					
4- Others	1 architect from the Direction of Urban Planning and Environment (provincial government)				
	1 architect from the Land Subdivision Board (provincial gov.)				
	Total: 8 people				
		1 real estate agency owner			
		1 sales executive from a real estate agency			
		1 expert in legislation on gated communities			
		1 member of the local church in charge of charity activities			
		1 headteacher of a school attended by children from Palmares			
		1 worker (decorator)			
		1 walking retailer (he sells eggs within the limits of Palmares)			
		2 lawyers who work on legal issues regarding gated communities			
		1 researcher from Buenos Aires who works on gated communities			
		Total: 10 people			
	TOTAL	95 people			

A gender balance among the interviewees was kept throughout the process of their selection. Nevertheless, this was not possible for the board of the homeowners' association in Palmares since it was gender-biased with more men than women and a man always being the president of the board so far. Table B.2 shows the distribution of the interviewees living in Palmares according to gender and their participation in the homeowners' association. The category of "common residents" refers to residents who did not have a position on the board of Palmares. However, some of them

participated in the association as members of different committees to deal with issues such as security, maintenance of common spaces, youth and behaviour.

**Table B.2: Interviewed residents of Palmares according to gender and participation in the board of the homeowners' association**

Gender	Membership	
	Common residents	Members of Board's Association
Female	26	1
Male	20	3
Total	46	4

The age of the interviewed gated community's residents ranged from 13 to 80 years old, as explained in Chapter 4. Table B.3 shows the distribution of the interviewed residents of Palmares by gender and age groupings. Nearly all houses in Palmares were occupied by their owners as reflected in the sample. Only one tenant was interviewed.

**Table B.3: Interviewed residents of Palmares according to gender and age**

Gender	Age groupings (in years old)						Total
	13-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50- 59	60- +	
Female	2	1	8	8	7	1	27
Male	2	3	5	8	4	1	23
Total	4	4	13	16	11	2	50

Thus, although it was not initially planned in the research project, the type of housing became the most important element to classify the neighbourhoods and also direct observation became an essential research method, as explained in Chapter 4. The four outside neighbourhoods varied amongst themselves in the type of housing concerned. A typology of housing to classify these neighbourhoods, as shown in Table B.4, was constructed as a result of direct observation during the fieldwork.

**Table B.4: Housing typology**

Housing types
<b>Type 1: Top quality house</b>
Detached house in a large plot. One or more storeys. Top quality materials. Individually designed. Large house with more than three bedrooms and two toilets. Double garage and large garden. Swimming pool. Service rooms. Luxurious elements (i.e. sauna, Jacuzzi, gym).
<b>Type 2: Good quality house</b>
Semi-detached house or terraced-house. Good quality materials. Medium-sized house in a regular or small plot. Similar designs. Single garage. Might have garden. One or two storeys.
<b>Type 3: Regular quality house</b>
Terraced and small house in a small plot. Similar designs. Built by the state (or trade union or developer company) with good or regular quality materials some decades earlier. Might have single garage and garden. One storey.
<b>Type 4: Bad quality house</b>
Very small shack located in an informal settlement. Not solid structures, self-help built with precarious materials (i.e. plastic, cardboard). Dirt floor. Outside latrine.

It was also intended to keep a balance of gender regarding “outsiders”, but it was not always possible. Table B.5 shows the distribution of interviewees from the outside communities according to their age, gender and participation on the board of the residents’ associations.

**Table B.5: Interviewed residents from surrounding neighbourhoods by age and gender**

Neighbourhoods	Gender	Age groupings (in years old)				Total
		20-29	30-39	40-49	50- +	
“Altos de la Puntilla”	Female	1	1	-	1	3
	Male	-	-	1	-	1
	Total	1	1	1	1	4
“Fuchs”	Female	2	-	1	2*	5
	Male	1	-	-	1*	2
	Total	3	-	1	3	7
“Obras Sanitarias”	Female	-	-	1	1	2
	Male	-	-	-	1*	1
	Total	-	-	1	2	3
“Urundel”	Female	2*	-	1	-	3
	Male	-	1	-	1*	2
	Total	2	1	1	1	5
TOTAL		6	2	4	7	19

\* Indicates that one person from that category took part on the board of the residents’ association of his/her neighbourhood mostly as president or vice-president.

The majority of interviewees were neither enthusiastic nor against the research, probably because it was not important to them, although it was about them. This reflects what other researchers also found, like Shaffir (1991) in his research on

ultra-Orthodox Jews. The next sub-section comments on the structure of the interview schedules, including the key topics discussed.

## **B.2. Interview schedules**

Having a good and comprehensive interview schedule provides a decisive step towards the success of the research. It acts as a guide during a conversation with an interviewee. The interview schedule for the residents of Palmares was tested in the pilot project, as mentioned in Chapter 4. On that basis, some questions were reformulated and new questions were added. As the fieldwork progressed new issues came up and were added to the interview schedules or received more emphasis, whilst others were dismissed as they became of minor importance.

Different questionnaire schedules were used according to each group of interviewees. There were eight main interview schedules (included in Appendix D) for: 1) Palmares' residents; 2) the local outside residents, including members of the outside residents associations; 3) government staff; 4) developers; 5) members of the board of the homeowners' association from Palmares; 6) Palmares' manager; 7) Palmares' chief of security; and 8) the security staff from Palmares. In addition, there were particular interview schedules for "other sources" (Sub-Group 4 in Table B.1), such as the headteacher of a school, lawyers and a researcher.

Interview schedules were organised into several sets of topics. The most comprehensive interview schedule was the one for Palmares' residents since they were the main study group. The main objective was to talk about their social practices as well as their viewpoints about living in a gated community, about their inside and outside neighbours and about the city they live in. The first set of questions aimed at exploring reasons for living in a gated community and for choosing Palmares and not any other neighbourhood. Then, questions concerned satisfaction with the settlement, likes and dislikes. Later, issues about relationships with inside and outside residents were raised. After that, there was a set of questions on social practices performed by the household's members. Finally, there were questions on particular issues like security inside the neighbourhood, participation in the homeowners' association, and the internal codes of the gated community.

The interview schedule for the members of the outside surrounding communities was focused on their viewpoints about Palmares and its residents as well as practices relating to social interaction between “outsiders” and “insiders”. The interview schedule for Palmares staff concentrated on discussing everyday life within the gated community, issues about their jobs and their relationships with residents, as well as viewpoints about living in gated communities. The interviews with government staff, developers and other key informants addressed two main topics: 1) their viewpoints about Palmares and gated communities in MAM; 2) issues about Palmares with regards to its legal status, the history of its development and planning issues. The main difficulty faced when contacting government staff was that they had to be explained and convinced that the interviews were for an academic research and not related to the “corruption case” in which Palmares was involved in relation to its legal status, as explained in Chapter 5. During the interviews, it was essential to be careful when discussing this case of corruption and not to force the interviewee to discuss this topic if s/he did not seem to be willing to do so.

The other interview schedules addressed particular issues depending on the interviewee. For instance, the interview with the headteacher of a private school attended by many children from Palmares addressed issues concerning behavioural problems of children living in gated communities and in particular, of children from Palmares. The interview with lawyers discussed legal problems in this type of neighbourhood and the interview with an expert on gated communities’ legislation enquired about the legal void on this topic, as mentioned in Chapter 2.

It is worth noting that Palmares’ residents were not eager to talk about the outside neighbourhoods and, similarly, the latter were not very interested in Palmares’ issues. The longer interviews with outside neighbours were with those who wanted to complain about some of the consequences of having a gated community located opposite their houses. These interviews were one of the few channels to express their dislikes. The next sub-section discusses how data was kept and the importance of the observation method throughout the fieldwork.

### B.3. Observing and recording data

There is a controversy amongst social researchers about the use of tape-recorders during interviews (Burton, 2000), but in this research tape-recording proved a valuable asset. Following the experience during the pilot project, along with previous experiences conducting semi-structured interviews, it was decided to tape-record all interviews if the interviewee allowed it. Interviews conducted with Palmares staff were the exception as they could feel exposed. Tape-recording provided a more reliable record of the interview. Most individuals did not seem to be intimidated by it as they knew the record was for the only purpose of the research<sup>148</sup>. Not having to take notes made interviews shorter and, most important, it was possible to establish a better rapport with the interviewee. Only two interviewees from Palmares refused to be tape-recorded.

A record was kept of all interviews in the form of notes taken or tapes recorded and also of all the observations made when visiting the gated community and the outside four neighbourhoods. Once the fieldwork was finished, recorded interviews were transcribed into text format to be analysed using N-Vivo, as explained in Chapter 4. Nevertheless, the first interviews were transcribed during the first weeks of the fieldwork to enable them being read through and to decide whether change to some discussed topics or to the approach to sensitive issues was needed. When interviews could not be tape-recorded the interview was typewritten right after having been conducted using memory notes taken during the interview.

A log was kept throughout the fieldwork research. It contained decisions made at the various stages of the research, as well as personal impressions and reflections. It also had information about the duration, date and venue of the interviews, as well as the process of gaining access to each interviewee and main characteristics of the interviewees. The log registered what was observed: type of housing, number of cars and daily activities in each of the examined neighbourhoods as well. It also contained some of the preliminary findings. During the data analysis and the writing-up, the log was a useful *aide-mémoire* and reflective tool, as mentioned in Chapter 4.

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<sup>148</sup> In two or three cases, interviewees asked during the interview to stop tape-recording to make particular comments (i.e. giving names of neighbours) and then allowed to continue the tape-recording. These comments were written down once the interview was finished.



When planning the research project, direct observation was not considered as a technique to be used in the research. However, as explained in Chapter 4, during the fieldwork, it turned out to be a valuable source of data that helped to understand everyday life in a gated community and its surroundings as well as social practices and viewpoints of its residents and the outside local residents. Observation is a simple research technique that implies not only observing the setting, but also noting body language and gestures during interviews. The housing typology previously presented in Section B.1 was built as a result of this observation for the purpose of establishing the differences in the socio-economic levels of the social actors involved.

#### **B.4. Conclusions**

This appendix presented further comments on the research process developed during the fieldwork in Palmares. It explained the composition of the interviewees, their engagement and collaboration in the research. Open-ended interview was the principal research method used. Although it was not considered in the research project proposal, direct observation turned out to be a relevant secondary research technique in discovering throughout the visits to the gated community and its surrounding area how everyday life happens there. Furthermore, some information was collected through government reports, the A.Pro.CUP.'s newsletters and legal documents.

## **APPENDIX C: WHO WERE THE INTERVIEWEES?**

**Palmares' residents** (in alphabetical order)<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Interviewees are given pseudonyms in Spanish to protect their privacy. Although the thesis used the information collected while interviewing 95 people, as explained in Chapter 4, this list includes only interviewees quoted in the thesis, which are 86.







**“Altos de la Puntilla”’s residents**

**“Fuchs”’s residents**

**“Obras Sanitarias”’s residents**

**“Urundel”’s residents**

**Palmares' staff**

**Government's staff**



## **Other actors**

## **APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES**

### **List of the interview schedules:**

- Interview schedules used during the piloting process:  
Interview schedule for gated communities' residents
  
- Interview schedules used during the fieldwork<sup>150</sup> (the first model of interview schedules is in English, while the version enlarged according to the progress of the research is in Spanish):
  1. Interview schedule for the residents of Palmares
  2. Interview schedule for the members of the surrounding communities
  3. Interview schedule for government staff
  4. Interview schedule for developers
  5. Interview schedule for the members of the board of A.Pro.CUP
  6. Interview schedule for the manager of the gated community
  7. Interview schedule for the head of the security service provided in Palmares
  8. Interview schedule for the security guards of Palmares

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<sup>150</sup> For all the interviewees considered as "Others" in Table B.1 (Appendix B) ad-hoc interview schedules not attached here were used as they were made up by different questions included in some of the above schedules.

## **Piloting process: June 2002**

### **Interview schedule for residents of gated communities**

1. How long have you been living here?
2. Who lives in the house?
3. Why did you choose to live here?
4. Why do you think people choose to live in gated communities?
5. Are you satisfied with the neighbourhood? Would you like to live somewhere else? If so, where?
6. Where did you live before moving here?
7. What's the main difference between living here and where you lived before?
8. Are you satisfied with the services provided by the gated community considering the monthly maintenance charge you pay?
9. What is it you like most about the neighbourhood?
10. What is it you like least about the neighbourhood?
11. Would you recommend somebody to live here?
12. Who lives here in terms of socio-economic position?
13. What kind of relationship do you have with your neighbours? Why?
14. Why is that?
15. Do you know somebody from the surrounding neighbourhoods?
16. Do you have any kind of relationship with the surrounding neighbourhoods? With whom? Why?
17. Where do you perform your everyday activities? (Specify activities performed within the limits of the gated community, activities performed outside but in the surrounding neighbourhoods, and activities performed in the open city)
18. What is the meaning of the barrier for you? What do you feel when you enter the neighbourhood?
19. Do you think that status is one of the reasons to choose to live in a gated community?
20. Regarding the security of the gated community, are you satisfied with the people who provide this service?
21. Do you know about robberies that had occurred inside the gated community?
22. Do you participate in the board of residents? Why not or yes?
23. Are you satisfied with the performance of the board of residents? Why?
24. According to you, what is the main difference between Dalvian y Palmares?
25. What kind of relationship do you (as resident of the gated community or as the gated community) have with the municipality?

## Fieldwork: January-April 2003

### Interview schedules<sup>151</sup>

#### Possible questions:

##### ⇒ Questions for the residents of the gated communities:

1. When did you move to the gated community? (maybe start asking about the origin of the gated community).
2. Why did you decide to move to this gated community?
3. When you had to decide about moving here, did you consider the neighbourhoods surrounding this gated community as a factor for moving here or not?
4. Are you happy with your decision? Why?
5. Who are the residents of this gated community? Are there social differences within the walls or is there social homogeneity?
6. Did your life change due to moving to the gated community? Why and how?
7. What is the difference between living in a gated community and in any other neighbourhood?
8. Which are the taxes that you pay for living here?
9. Are the services (water, rubbish collection, etc.) provided by the local government or by a private enterprise?
10. What are the benefits of living here?
11. What are the drawbacks of living here?
12. Do you think that gated communities are a solution to crimes and urban violence?
13. What do you think about the wall that surrounds your gated community? What are its reasons?
14. What kind of activities do you do within the walls?
15. What kind of activities do you do outside the walls?
16. Who are those people who live outside?
17. What kind of social relationships do you have with your neighbours outside the walls? Where do you usually meet them? (try to find out if these relationships have changed in the last year/s)
18. What do you think people from the surrounding neighbourhoods think about the residents of this gated community?
19. Have been any conflicts between the residents of the gated community and the neighbours outside?
20. Do you think that the local government encourages the development of gated communities?
21. What do you think are the benefits for local governments to have more gated communities within their territories?
22. Do you participate in public organisations or public events organised by the surrounding neighbourhoods?

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<sup>151</sup> These are the initial interview schedules. Once the research had started and after having done the first interviews, interview schedules were modified, with new questions added, some other questions deleted, and emphasising certain issues. These questions served as guidelines for the interview. The order of the questions frequently changed according to the dynamic of the interview. The enlarged interview schedules are also included here, but in Spanish as there was no need to translate them into English for the research.

23. Is there any homeowners' association in the gated community? Do you participate in it? What kind of activities are organised by this association?
24. People who study gated communities argue that they encourage segregation in the city, that social differences become more evident. What do you think about this?
25. What do you think are the main characteristics of the MAM (Metropolitan Area of Mendoza)?

**⇒ Questions for the neighbours who live outside the walls of the gated community:**

1. Do you know somebody who lives in gated communities? Why (or from here) do you know her/him?
2. Have you been inside Palmares? Were you checked at the entrance? What do you think about this check?
3. What do you think about this gated community? Who lives in Palmares? What do you think about the people who live there?
4. What do you think are their opinions (of Palmares' residents) about the outside neighbourhoods?
5. Why do you think there is a wall that surrounds the gated community?
6. Do you have any kind of relationship with the people who live within the walls?
7. Do you feel discriminated against by the residents of Palmares?
8. Would you like to live in a gated community? Why?
9. Why do you think people choose to live in a gated community?
10. Do you think that gated communities are a solution to crime and urban violence?
11. What are the benefits of having a gated community in your area?
12. Have there been any conflicts between (you) the neighbours outside and the residents of the gated community?
13. To what extent do you think that the state encourages the development of gated communities? Why?
14. People who study gated communities argue that they encourage segregation in the city, that social differences become more evident. What do you think about this?
15. What do you think are the main characteristics of the MAM (Metropolitan Area of Mendoza)?

**⇒ Questions for policymakers and staff from local and provincial governments:**

1. Which are the most common features of cities?
2. What do you think are the most important changes that occurred in the MAM during the last years in terms of the spatial structure of the city?
3. What have been the main reasons for the appearance of gated communities?
1. Who are the residents of gated communities? Are there social differences within the walls or is there social homogeneity?
4. Do you think that gated communities are a solution to crime and urban violence?
5. What do you think about the walls of the gated communities? Which are their main reasons for their existence?
6. To what extent do you think that the state policies facilitate the increase of gated communities?
7. What kind of relationships exist between people from gated communities and the local government?

8. Which are the services provided by the local government to the residents of the gated communities? (Like rubbish collection, fire brigade, etc.)
9. Do residents of the gated communities participate in issues regarding the public space (society, neighbourhood, etc.) or in public events?
10. What services does the local government provide to the gated communities?
11. What kind of benefits does the location of a gated community have for the local government? And for the society as a whole?
12. What kinds of conflicts have there been between residents of the gated communities and the surrounding neighbours?
13. How do you understand the concept of segregation? To what extent do you think that there is a process of segregation going on in the MAM? Could you give some examples?
14. People who study gated communities argue that they encourage segregation in the city, that social differences become more evident. What do you think about this?
15. How do you imagine that the MAM will be in 10 or 15 years' time?

**⇒ Questions for developers:**

1. How do you define a city? Which are the most common features of cities?
2. What do you think are the most important changes that occurred in the MAM during the last years in terms of the spatial structure of the city?
3. What have been the main reasons for the appearance of gated communities?
4. Who are the residents of this gated community? Are there social differences within the walls or is there social homogeneity?
5. Do you think that gated communities are a solution to crimes and urban violence?
6. To what extent do you think that the state policies facilitate the increase of gated communities?
7. What are the main benefits of gated communities for their residents?
8. What kind of benefits does the location of a gated community have for the local government? And for the whole society?
9. How do you define segregation? To what extent do you think that there is a process of segregation going on in the MAM? Could you give some examples?
10. People who study gated communities argue that they encourage segregation in the city, that social differences become more evident. What do you think about this?
11. How do you imagine that the MAM will be in 10 or 15 years' time?

## Cuestionarios para las entrevistas semi-estructuradas<sup>152</sup>

### ⇒ Cuestionario para los habitantes de Palmares:

Nombre

Dirección

Cantidad de Lotes/ m<sup>2</sup> de terreno

#### *Historical questions*

1. ¿Cuánto tiempo hace que vive acá?
2. ¿Cuándo compraron el lote?
3. ¿Quiénes viven en la casa?
4. ¿Ud. trabaja? ¿en qué? ¿y su esposa/o?
5. Nivel de instrucción de la pareja
6. ¿Cuáles fueron los motivos por los que decidieron mudarse a Palmares? ¿Dónde vivían antes?
7. ¿Por qué eligieron Palmares y no otro barrio privado?
8. ¿Cómo describirías el entorno de Palmares? ¿Lo tuvieron en cuenta en el momento de mudarse?
9. ¿Está satisfecho con la decisión de haberse mudado a Palmares? ¿Por qué?
10. ¿Considera que su vida ha cambiado por el hecho de haberse mudado a Palmares? ¿En qué sentido? ¿Por qué? (cómo era su vida antes y ahora?)
11. ¿Recomendaría a alguien vivir en Palmares?
12. ¿Tuvo Ud. (u otro miembro de su familia) problemas de adaptación al barrio? ¿Por qué?
13. ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de vivir en un barrio privado (o específicamente en Palmares)? (tal vez comparar con la propia experiencia antes de vivir en un barrio privado). ¿Qué es lo que Palmares le ofrece?
14. ¿Cuáles son las desventajas de vivir en un barrio privado? (tal vez comparar con la propia experiencia antes de vivir en un barrio privado).
15. En los últimos años ha habido un boom de barrios privados en Mendoza, ¿por qué cree que se ha dado este fenómeno?
16. ¿Cuál será el futuro de los barrios privados en Mendoza?
17. Algun a publicidad de Palmares decía que el barrio era o iba a ser el barrio más exclusivo de Mendoza, crees que esto es así? ¿Por qué?

#### *Practical questions*

18. ¿Quién provee los servicios de recolección de basura, agua potable, etc.? ¿Qué servicios provee el municipio y cuáles son contratados por Uds.?
19. ¿Cuáles son los impuestos que Uds. pagan?
20. ¿Querría que el Barrio brindara otros servicios? ¿Cuáles?
21. ¿Qué es lo que pagan a Palmares (expensas por ej.)? ¿Considera que es adecuado el monto en relación con los beneficios o servicios obtenidos?
22. ¿Hay transporte público hasta las cercanías del barrio? ¿Ud. lo utiliza? ¿Y alguien en su familia? ¿Por qué?
23. ¿Dónde vive la empleada?
24. ¿Qué actividades realiza dentro de los límites del barrio?

<sup>152</sup> These are the enlarged interview schedules used during the fieldwork research.

- 25.¿ Qué actividades realiza fuera del barrio (compras, club, amigos, práctica religiosa, etc.)?
- 26.¿ Dónde realiza sus compras?
- 27.¿ Entran proveedores al barrio? ¿Quiénes? ¿Le compran a los proveedores que entran al barrio? A cuáles?
- 28.¿ Hay zonas/ áreas de la ciudad que antes usaba o por donde andaba y ahora (desde que vive en Palmares no? Cuáles? ¿Extraña esto? ¿Por qué?)
- 29.¿ A qué escuela asisten sus hijos? (pública o privada) ¿Concurren otros vecinos del barrio ahí? ¿Dónde queda la escuela? ¿Qué medio de transporte utilizan para ir a la escuela? ¿Otras actividades de sus hijos? ¿Dónde?
- 30.¿ Actividad religiosa? ¿A cuál iglesia va? ¿Van otros vecinos del barrio?
- 31.¿ Qué relación tiene con los demás vecinos de Palmares? ¿Realiza alguna actividad con ellos? ¿Cuál?
- 32.¿ Por qué no realiza ninguna actividad con sus vecinos?
- 33.¿ Quiénes son sus grupos de amigos? ¿De dónde? ¿Dónde viven?
- 34.¿ Qué tipo de conflictos internos hay en el barrio?
- 35.¿ Qué medidas de seguridad toman en su casa? (Ej. ¿Cierra la puerta con llave? ¿Cierra el auto con llave? ¿Alarmas?)
- 36.¿ Ha sido víctima de situaciones de violencia o robos dentro del barrio? ¿Y fuera de él? ¿Algún otro miembro de su familia?
- 37.¿ Considera apropiados los controles de la guardia de seguridad?
- 38.¿ Qué tipo de controles se adoptan con las personas que trabajan dentro del barrio? ¿Qué opinan ellos?
- 39.¿ Cuáles son las rutas de acceso al barrio?
- 40.¿ Tiene conocimiento sobre casos de vandalismo infantil?
- 41.Res pecto a las regulaciones internas del barrio, ¿qué opinión le merecen? ¿Se siente cómodo/a con ellas o considera que son excesivas? ¿Qué cosas cambiaría? ¿Cómo se deciden estas normas?
- 42.¿ Cree que es necesario que exista un reglamento interno del barrio?
- 43.¿ Asistió a la última asamblea (25 de marzo)? ¿De qué se trató? ¿Qué opinión tiene de todo este proceso?
- 44.¿ Le parece adecuado que exista una especie de gobierno dentro del barrio? ¿Qué opina del Tribunal de Faltas?
- 45.¿ Ud. participa en organizaciones públicas? ¿De qué tipo? ¿Y en eventos públicos? ¿De dónde? (eventos desarrollados en zonas aledañas u otra zona?)
- 46.Res pecto a la Unión Vecinal del Barrio, ¿está conforme con la forma en que está organizada?
47. ¿Cuáles son las tareas que realiza esta asociación?
- 48.¿ Participa en esta asociación? ¿Por qué?
- 49.¿ Quiénes conforman la Asociación? ¿Por qué vías se comunican (noticias por ejemplo)?
- 50.¿ Está de acuerdo con la ampliación de la 3era etapa? ¿Por qué?

#### *Ideological questions*

- 51.¿ Quiénes viven en Palmares? ¿Considera que las familias pertenecen a un mismo grupo socioeconómico? ¿Existen diferencias socioeconómicas entre los residentes del barrio?
- 52.¿ Cualquiera persona puede vivir en Palmares? ¿Existe algún tipo de selección de los residentes en Palmares?
- 53.¿ Podrían vivir políticos en Palmares?



- 54.¿Cuál es la diferencia entre vivir en un barrio privado y vivir en un barrio “abierto”?
- 55.¿Cree que pueden haber consecuencias “negativas” para los chicos que crecen en barrios privados? ¿De qué tipo o cuáles?
- 56.Si Ud. tiene que dar su dirección, ¿menciona que vive en Palmares? ¿En qué ocasiones si y en cuáles no? ¿Cuál es la reacción de la gente ante esto?
57. ¿Considera que los barrios privados son una solución frente a problemas tales como la violencia urbana, los delitos, etc.? ¿Tiene conocimiento de casos de robos ocurridos dentro del barrio?
- 58.¿Qué piensa o qué sensación le provoca la barrera que rodea Palmares?
- 59.¿Conoce a los vecinos de los barrios de los alrededores? ¿De dónde los conoce?
- 60.¿Dónde los ve o se los encuentra? (ver si las relaciones han cambiado en el último tiempo o no).
- 61.¿Qué tipo de relación tiene con los vecinos de los barrios de los alrededores?
- 62.¿Qué opinión tiene de los vecinos de afuera del barrio?
- 63.¿Qué piensa que los vecinos de los barrios de los alrededores piensan de Uds. (de los que viven en Palmares)?
- 64.¿Tiene conocimiento de conflictos/ problemas entre los habitantes de Palmares y los vecinos de afuera?
- 65.¿Tiene conocimiento de casos de gente que haya querido entrar al barrio diciendo que no debería ser privado, etc?
- 66.¿Considera que el gobierno local promueve la aparición de barrios privados? ¿Por qué? ¿De qué manera? ¿Qué tipo de relación hay con el gobierno local?
- 67.¿Cuáles son los beneficios que tiene aparejada la instalación de un barrio privado desde el punto de vista del gobierno local?
- 68.¿Cómo fue la actitud de los técnicos/ supervisores de la municipalidad para aprobar las casas, loteo, etc.?

#### *Abstract questions*

- 69.¿Cuáles cree que son las ventajas de vivir en una ciudad? ¿Y las desventajas?
- 70.¿Cómo se imagina a Mendoza dentro de 10 ó 15 años?
71. ¿Cómo se imagina el futuro de los barrios cerrados en Mendoza?
- 72.Algun a gente dice que la ciudad es un lugar donde coexiste la diversidad, donde gente con diferentes características se reúnen y encuentran y que esta es una de las características más importantes de una ciudad. Estás de acuerdo con esta afirmación? ¿Por qué?
- 73.Algunas personas que estudian el fenómeno del surgimiento de los barrios privados opinan que se trata de un proceso de segregación social, que aumentan las diferencias sociales, ¿qué opina de esta afirmación?

⇒ **Cuestionario para los habitantes de los barrios vecinos de Palmares:**

Edad

Ocupación

Antigüedad en el Barrio

Cantidad de gente que vive en la casa

1. ¿Cuáles cree que son las razones para vivir en Palmares (o en un barrio privado)?
2. ¿Tiene algún tipo de relación con gente que vive en Palmares?
3. ¿Conoce a alguien que viva en Palmares? ¿De dónde conoce a esta/s persona/s?
4. ¿Ha entrado a Palmares alguna vez?
5. ¿Qué opinión tiene de Palmares? ¿Le gusta el barrio?
6. ¿Qué opina de la gente que vive ahí? ¿Quiénes viven en Palmares?
7. ¿Cuál cree que es la opinión de los habitantes de Palmares respecto a los vecinos de los barrios de los alrededores?
8. ¿Considera que existe una división muy estricta entre los barrios de los alrededores y Palmares? ¿Por qué? ¿En qué sentido?
9. ¿Se ha sentido alguna vez discriminada/o por los vecinos de Palmares? Por qué?
10. ¿Qué opinión/ sensación le produce la barrera y la pared que rodea Palmares? ¿Cuál cree que es el propósito de la misma?
11. ¿Le gustaría vivir en Palmares u otro barrio privado si pudiera comprar un lote? ¿Por qué?
12. ¿Cree que los barrios privados son una solución ante la violencia urbana, los robos, etc.? ¿Conoce casos de robos en Palmares?
13. ¿Considera que su barrio ha cambiado desde la construcción de Palmares?
14. ¿Cuáles cree que son los beneficios para su barrio (o su área) de tener un barrio privado en las cercanías?
15. ¿Y cuáles son las desventajas?
16. ¿Sabe de la existencia de algún conflicto entre los vecinos de Palmares y vecinos de los barrios de los alrededores?
17. ¿Por qué cree que la entrada de servicio es por el barrio Fusch?
18. ¿Considera que vivir en un barrio privado puede tener consecuencias negativas para un chico que se cría ahí?
19. ¿Cree que el tema del status puede ser en algunos casos un motivo para elegir vivir en un barrio cerrado?
20. ¿Cuál cree que es la posición de la municipalidad respecto a los barrios privados? ¿Los apoyan? ¿Incentivan su desarrollo o por el contrario se oponen a ellos?
21. ¿Cuáles cree que son las ventajas de vivir en una ciudad? ¿Y las desventajas?
22. ¿Cuáles cree que son las principales características del Área Metropolitana de Mendoza?
23. Algunas personas que estudian el fenómeno del surgimiento de los barrios privados opinan que se trata de un proceso de segregación social, que aumentan las diferencias sociales, ¿qué opina de esta afirmación?
24. ¿Cómo se imagina el futuro de los barrios cerrados en Mendoza?
25. ¿Cómo se imagina que será el AMM dentro de 10 ó 15 años?

⇒ **Cuestionario para políticos y técnicos del gobierno local y provincial:**

1. ¿Cuáles considera que son las características específicas del AMM?
2. ¿Cuáles han sido los cambios más import. ocurridos en el AMM en los últimos años?
3. ¿Cuáles cree que han sido las principales razones del surgimiento de barrios privados en el AMM en los últimos años?
4. ¿Cuál cree que es el rasgo distintivo de los barrios privados?
5. ¿Considera que los barrios privados son una solución ante problemas de violencia urbana, robos, etc.?
6. ¿Qué opinión/ sensación le merece la barrera y la pared de los barrios privados?  
¿Cuál es su objetivo?
7. Según su opinión, cuáles serían las consecuencias de la aparición de barrios privados?
8. ¿Quiénes son los residentes de barrios privados? ¿Cree que pertenecen al mismo grupo socioeconómico o hay diferencias sociales al interior de los mismos?
9. ¿Cuál cree que será el futuro de los barrios privados en el AMM?
10. ¿Cómo es la relación entre el gobierno local y los barrios privados?
11. ¿Qué tipo de relación existe entre los vecinos de los barrios privados (o tal vez con la unión vecinal) y el gobierno local?
12. ¿Está de acuerdo en que tengan su propio gobierno (intendente, tribunal de faltas, asamblea, etc.)?
13. ¿Qué tipo de injerencia tiene el municipio en las cuestiones del Barrio? ¿En qué cosas puede intervenir y en cuáles no?
14. ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de la instalación de barrios privados desde el punto de vista del gobierno local? ¿Y para la sociedad en general?
15. ¿Cuáles son los servicios que el gobierno local provee a los barrios privados (recolección de basura, bomberos, ambulancia, etc.)?
16. ¿Considera que la provisión de servicios dentro del barrio implica mayores costos económicos para el gobierno local?
17. ¿Cuál es el procedimiento burocrático que debe seguir un proyecto para constituirse en un barrio privado? ¿Qué requisitos tiene que cumplir?
18. ¿Cuál es la legislación vigente en el caso de barrios privados? ¿En qué se basan uds.?
19. ¿Considera que los vecinos de los barrios privados participan en cuestiones relacionadas con el espacio público, la sociedad en general o en eventos públicos?
20. ¿Conoce situaciones de conflictos entre los residentes de barrios privados y el gobierno local o entre los residentes de barrios privados y los vecinos de los barrios de los alrededores? caso específico de Palmares
21. ¿Cómo se resolvió el tema de las calles de Palmares y la entrada al barrio?  
¿Tuvieron oposición por parte de algún sector?
22. ¿Cuáles fueron los terrenos donados por Palmares? Finalidad de estos terrenos.
23. Algunas personas que estudian el fenómeno del surgimiento de los barrios privados opinan que se trata de un proceso de segregación social, que aumentan las diferencias sociales, ¿qué opina de esta afirmación? (quién segrega a quién?)
24. ¿Considera que se está produciendo un proceso de mayor segregación en el AMM? ¿Por qué? Ejemplo?
25. ¿Cómo se imagina que será el AMM dentro de 10 ó 15 años?
26. ¿Cómo se imagina el futuro de los barrios cerrados en Mendoza?

⇒ **Cuestionario para desarrolladores urbanos:**

1. ¿Cuáles cree que son las características principales de una ciudad?
2. ¿Cuáles cree que son las características principales del AMM?
3. ¿Cuáles cree que son los principales cambios ocurridos en el AMM en los últimos años?
4. ¿Cuáles cree que han sido las razones principales de la aparición de barrios cerrados en el AMM?
5. ¿Cuál cree que es el rasgo distintivo de los barrios privados?
6. ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de vivir en un barrio privado?
7. ¿Cuáles son las desventajas de vivir en un barrio privado?
8. ¿Quiénes viven en los barrios privados? ¿Cree que pertenecen al mismo grupo socioeconómico o hay diferencias sociales al interior de los mismos?
9. ¿Considera que los barrios privados son una solución ante problemas de violencia urbana, robos, etc.?
10. ¿Qué opinión/ sensación le merece la barrera y la pared de los barrios privados? ¿Cuál cree que es su objetivo?
11. ¿Cuál cree que será el futuro de los barrios privados en el AMM?
12. Algunas personas que estudian el fenómeno del surgimiento de los barrios privados opinan que se trata de un proceso de segregación social, que aumentan las diferencias sociales, ¿qué opina de esta afirmación?
13. ¿Cómo es la relación entre el gobierno local y los barrios privados? ¿Considera que los gobiernos locales incentivan la instalación de barrios privados en su territorio?
14. ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de la instalación de barrios privados desde el punto de vista del gobierno local? ¿Y para la sociedad en general?
15. ¿Considera que se está produciendo un proceso de mayor segregación en el AMM? ¿Por qué? Ejemplo?
16. ¿Cómo se imagina que será el AMM dentro de 10 ó 15 años?
17. ¿Cómo se eligió la localización de Palmares? ¿Cuáles fueron los aspectos considerados?

**⇒ Cuestionario para los miembros de la Asociación de Vecinos de Palmares (A.Pro.CUP.):**

- 1- ¿Cuándo se creó la Asociación de Vecinos de Palmares?
- 2- ¿Cuáles fueron los motivos por los que se creó la Asociación?
- 3- ¿Cómo está conformada la Asociación?
- 4- ¿Cuáles son sus funciones?
- 5- Cantidad de asambleas realizadas
- 6- ¿Participan los vecinos en general? ¿Por qué?
- 7- ¿Cuáles son las funciones de las diferentes subcomisiones?
- 8- ¿Cómo es la recepción de las actividades realizadas por la Asociación por parte de los vecinos?
- 9- ¿Cuáles son los servicios que provee el barrio? ¿Cómo se realiza la contratación de las empresas?
- 10- ¿Quiénes forman parte de la Dirección Técnica del Barrio? ¿Cuáles son sus funciones?
- 11- ¿Por qué se creó la figura de “Jefe del Barrio”? ¿Cuáles son sus funciones?
- 12- ¿Cómo fue tomada la creación de la figura de “Jefe del Barrio” por parte de los vecinos?
- 13- ¿Cuáles son las medidas de seguridad que se toman en el barrio?
- 14- ¿Formas de comunicación de la Asociación con los vecinos del barrio?
- 15- ¿Por qué hay tanto recambio del personal de seguridad?
- 16- ¿Realizan algún tipo de actividad/ servicio/ prestación a la comunidad? ¿Por qué?
- 17- ¿Cómo se ha resuelto el tema de la legislación (ordenanza)?
- 18- ¿Han tenido algún problema con los barrios de los alrededores? ¿Cómo se han solucionado?

### ⇒ Cuestionario para el manager del Barrio Palmares

1. Edad
2. Nivel de instrucción
3. ¿Cuánto tiempo hace que trabaja en el Barrio?
4. ¿Tenía experiencia anterior en este tipo de trabajo?
5. ¿Está conforme con su trabajo? ¿Se siente cómodo? ¿Le gusta?
6. ¿En qué consiste su trabajo?
7. ¿Cómo es su relación con los vecinos?
8. ¿Qué tipo de conflictos se le presentan en su tarea cotidiana?
9. Me han comentado que un problema es con los chicos o adolescentes que conducen four-tracks u otros vehículos a alta velocidad, ¿qué medidas se han tomado al respecto? ¿han dado resultado?
10. ¿Se ha dado casos de robos dentro del barrio?
11. ¿Cuáles son las medidas de seguridad que se toman en el barrio?
12. ¿Cómo se controla a las visitas? ¿A los obreros? ¿A las empleadas domésticas?
13. ¿Entran proveedores al barrio? ¿Cómo se los controla?
14. ¿Cuáles son las vías de comunicación de lo que sucede en el barrio?
15. ¿En qué consiste su relación con la Unión Vecinal?
16. ¿Cómo es la relación de Palmares con los barrios de los alrededores?
17. ¿Se han presentado casos de gente que quiera entrar al barrio diciendo que debería ser público? ¿Qué medida se toma en esos casos?
18. ¿Cree Ud. que Palmares es el barrio más exclusivo de Mendoza?
19. Si a Ud. le preguntaran quiénes viven en Palmares, ¿qué respondería?
20. ¿Cualquier persona puede vivir en Palmares?
21. ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de vivir en un barrio privado?
22. ¿Cuáles son las desventajas de vivir en un barrio privado?
23. ¿Cómo es la relación con la municipalidad?

⇒ **Cuestionario para el jefe seguridad del Barrio Palmares**

- 1- Edad y formación profesional
- 2- ¿Cuánto tiempo hace que trabaja en el Barrio como Jefe de Seguridad?
- 3- ¿Donde trabajaba antes? (Experiencia anterior y en la empresa de seguridad)
- 4- ¿En qué consiste su trabajo?
- 5- ¿Cuánta gente tiene a su cargo?
- 6- ¿Está conforme con su trabajo?
- 7- ¿Cómo se realiza el proceso de selección de los guardias?
- 8- ¿Con qué periodicidad se los rota de funciones?
- 9- ¿Están armados?
- 10- ¿Cuáles son los principales problemas o cuestiones que tiene que resolver en su actividad cotidiana?
- 11- ¿Considera que los vecinos están conformes con la seguridad actual del barrio?
- 12- ¿Se han dado casos de robos dentro del barrio?
- 13- ¿Se han dado casos de gente que quiera ingresar al barrio sin tener la autorización necesaria? ¿Qué medidas se toman en esos casos?
- 14- ¿Cómo es su relación con los vecinos?
- 15- ¿Cómo es su relación con la Asociación de Vecinos?
- 16- ¿Cuáles cree que son los beneficios de vivir en un barrio privado?
- 17- ¿Cuáles son las desventajas de vivir en un barrio privado?
- 18- Si le preguntaran quiénes viven en Palmares, ¿qué respondería?
- 19- ¿Cree que Palmares es el barrio más exclusivo de Mendoza?
- 20- ¿Considera que cualquier persona puede vivir en Palmares?
- 21- ¿Uds. tienen a su cargo la vigilancia del tránsito dentro del barrio, cómo se maneja el tema de los cuatriciclos y los chicos? ¿Se dan casos de chicos que no les hagan caso y no reconozcan su autoridad? ¿Qué se hace en esos casos?
- 22- ¿Cómo se controla a las visitas?
- 23- ¿Qué tipo de control se realiza a los obreros que entran a trabajar al barrio?
- 24- ¿Qué tipo de control se realiza a las empleadas domésticas que trabajan en el barrio?
- 25- ¿Se dan casos de gente que se queje por los controles?
- 26- ¿Se han dado casos de conflictos con los barrios vecinos?

## ⇒ Cuestionario para los guardias de seguridad

1. Edad
2. Nivel de instrucción
3. ¿Cuánto hace que trabajas en el barrio?
4. ¿En qué puestos has estado?
5. ¿Cuáles son esos puestos?
6. ¿Estos cargos son ascendentes o de mayor categoría?
7. ¿Dónde trabajabas antes?
8. ¿En que consiste tu trabajo? Tu cargo actual...
9. ¿Cómo es la jerarquía?
10. ¿Estás conforme con tu trabajo?
11. ¿Cómo se realiza el proceso de selección de los guardias?
12. ¿Quiénes están armados?
13. ¿Cuáles son los principales problemas/ cuestiones que tenes que resolver en tu actividad cotidiana, en tu trabajo de todos los días?
14. ¿Se han dado casos de robos dentro del barrio?
15. ¿Se han dado casos de gente que quiera entrar al barrio sin tener autorización?
16. ¿Cómo es tu relación con los vecinos?
17. ¿Cómo es tu relación con A.Pro.Cup? ¿Y con el manager? ¿Y con el jefe de seguridad?
18. ¿Cuáles crees que son los motivos por los que la gente se muda a un barrio privado?
19. ¿Cuáles son las desventajas de vivir en un barrio privado?
20. ¿Si te preguntaran quiénes viven en Palmares, qué responderías?
21. ¿Crees que Palmares es el barrio más exclusivo de Mendoza?
22. ¿Cómo es la relación con los chicos? Sobre todo el tema de los cuatriciclos...
23. ¿Qué tipo de control se realiza a los obreros que entran a trabajar al barrio?
24. ¿Qué tipo de control se realiza a las empleadas domésticas que trabajan en el barrio?
25. Si tuvieras que comparar la vida fuera y dentro del barrio, ¿cuáles crees que son las principales diferencias?
26. ¿Cómo se maneja el caso de los dúplex que tienen un lote o jardín y por lo tanto también pertenecen al barrio?
27. ¿Se han dado casos de conflictos con los barrios vecinos?
28. ¿Qué crees que piensan los que viven afuera de los que viven en Palmares?
29. ¿Qué es lo que más te llamó la atención cuando empezaste a trabajar en el barrio?



## APPENDIX E: NOTE ON PUBLICATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

During the process carried out to obtain the Philosophy Doctorate Degree, the author of this thesis published and presented in conferences the following pieces of work related to the topic of this thesis:

- 2008a **"Planificación urbana y actores sociales intervinientes: el desarrollo de urbanizaciones cerradas"**, X Coloquio Internacional de Geocrítica, Universidad de Barcelona, May 26-30, 2008, Barcelona.
- 2008b **"Physical barriers, symbolic borders: the development of gated communities"**, 2<sup>nd</sup> AESOP-Young Academics Meeting, San Petersburg, Russia, February 6-8, 2008. Available from <http://www.aesop-youngacademics.net/showvaproduct.php?docid=384>
- 2007a **"Urban transformations in Mendoza, Argentina"**, in *Istanbul*, Issue 60, pp. 96-97 [article published in Turkish under the title: "Mendoza'da duvarların arkasındaki hayatlar"].
- 2007b **"Social practices and viewpoints: a conceptual framework for the analysis of urban social group segregation and gated communities"**, in CD from 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Research Network Private Urban Governance & Gated communities, June 6-8, 2007, Paris. Available from [www.staff.uni-mainz.de/glasze/Abstracts\\_Papers\\_Paris\\_2007/Roitman.pdf](http://www.staff.uni-mainz.de/glasze/Abstracts_Papers_Paris_2007/Roitman.pdf)
- 2006 **"Who segregates whom? The analysis of a gated community in Mendoza, Argentina"**, in Atkinson, R. and S. Blandy (Ed.), *Gated communities*, Routledge, Abingdon, UK, pp. 112-130.
- 2005a **"Who segregates whom? The analysis of a gated community in Mendoza, Argentina"**, in *Housing Studies*, Vol.20, No 2, pp. 303-321.
- 2005b **"Social practices and gated communities in intermediate cities. The case of Argentina"**, in CD from International Symposium: Territory, control and enclosure: the ecology of urban fragmentation, Feb. 28- March 3, 2005. Pretoria, South Africa.
- 2005c **"Segregación en lo macro, unificación en lo micro"**, in *ConceptoCountry*, No4, Anio 2005, pp. 18-27.
- 2004a **"Urbanizaciones cerradas: estado de la cuestión hoy y propuesta teórica"**, in *Norte Grande*, No 32, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, pp. 5-19.
- 2004b **"Gated communities and the right to safety"**, in del Caz, R. et al. (Eds.) *Informe de Valladolid - The Right to Security and Safety*, Escuela de Arquitectura, Universidad de Valladolid, Spain, pp. 187-189.
- 2003a **"Who segregates whom?"**, paper presented at the conference Building Division or Safer Communities, University of Glasgow, September 2003. Available from <http://www.bris.ac.uk/sps/cnrpapersword/gated/roitman.pdf>
- 2003b **"Barrios privados y segregación social urbana en Mendoza, Argentina"**, in Bagini, L. et al., *Escritos de Sociología*, Ethos. Bs. As., 2003, pp. 129-156.
- 2003c **"Barrios cerrados y segregación social urbana"**, in *Scripta Nova*, Vol. VII, No 146, Universidad de Barcelona. Available from [http://www.ub.es/geocrit/sn/sn-146\(118\).htm](http://www.ub.es/geocrit/sn/sn-146(118).htm)



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